

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R13121 AAF-D

H.B. 671
By: Clardy (Nichols)
Higher Education
5/6/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

H.B. 671 would amend the Education Code to allow for an intercollegiate athletics fee at Stephen F. Austin State University.

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) is a member of an athletics conference that participates in National Collegiate Athletic Association events despite not being aided by an athletic fee. As one of only two universities in Texas, and the only one in its conference, to operate and maintain their athletics department and facilities without such a fee, SFA is struggling to keep up with other universities in the conference and nation.

This fee would not go into effect until approved by a majority vote of the entire student body. For the fee to be raised again in the future would require an additional majority vote of the student body.

Current law does not allow SFA to have an athletics fee.

H.B. 671 amends current law relating to an intercollegiate athletics fee at Stephen F. Austin State University and authorizes imposition of a fee.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 54, Education Code, by adding Section 54.5202, as follows:

Sec. 54.5202. INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS FEE; STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY. (a) Authorizes the board of regents of Stephen F. Austin State University to charge each student enrolled at the university an intercollegiate athletics fee in an initial amount not to exceed \$10 per semester credit hour for each semester or summer session. Authorizes the amount of the fee to be increased only as provided by Subsection (f).

(b) Authorizes the board of regents to prorate the amount of the fee for a summer session.

(c) Requires a student enrolled in more than 15 semester credit hours to pay the fee in an amount equal to the amount imposed on a student enrolled in 15 semester credit hours during the same semester or session.

(d) Authorizes revenue from the fee charged under this section to be used only for financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, or improving an athletic facility or for operating an intercollegiate athletics program at the university.

(e) Prohibits the fee from being charged unless approved by a majority vote of the students enrolled at the university who participate in a general student election held for that purpose.

(f) Authorizes the amount of the fee per semester credit hour to be increased from one academic year to the next only if approved by a majority vote of the students participating in a general student election held for that purpose or, if the amount of the increase does not exceed five percent, by a majority vote of the legislative body of the student government of the university.

(g) Requires the chief fiscal officer of the university to collect the fee and to deposit the revenue from the fee in an account to be known as the intercollegiate athletics fee account.

(h) Provides that a fee charged under this section is not considered in determining the maximum amount of student services fees that may be charged each student enrolled at the university under Section 54.503 (Student Services Fees).

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.