

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R23749 KSD-D

C.S.S.B. 1782
By: West
Higher Education
4/20/2017
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current statute places formula restrictions on the number of repeated or dropped courses, and the number of hours accumulated beyond a student's degree plan. These restrictions are meant to encourage timely degree completion, but can be a barrier to adult non-completers wishing to return to higher education. S.B. 1782 grants returning adult students with at least 50 semester credit hours completed, and who have not been enrolled for at least 24 months, one opportunity to enroll in higher education without penalty due to statutory restrictions such as the "30 hour rule," the "45 hour rule," the "three-peat rule", and the "six-drop rule." (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 1782 amends current law relating to the elimination of certain formula funding and dropped course restrictions for returning adult students at public institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 51.907, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.907, Education Code, by adding Subsection (e-1), to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to adopt rules under which an institution of higher education (IHE) is required to permit a student to drop one additional course under certain circumstances if the student has reenrolled at the IHE following a certain break in enrollment and successfully completed at least 50 semester credit hours of course work at an IHE before that break in enrollment.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 61.059, Education Code, by adding Subsection (r), to prohibit THECB, notwithstanding any other law, from excluding from number of semester credit hours reported to the Legislative Budget Board for formula funding semester credit hours for any course taken up to three times by a student who has reenrolled at an IHE following a certain break in enrollment and successfully completed at least 50 semester credit hours of course work at an IHE before that break in enrollment.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 61.0595(d), Education Code, to provide that the first additional 15 semester credit hours earned toward a degree program by a student who has reenrolled at an IHE following a certain break in enrollment and successfully completed at least 50 semester credit hours of course work at an IHE before that break in enrollment are not counted, among other certain semester credit hours, for purposes of determining whether the student has previously earned the number of semester credit hours specified by Subsection (a).

SECTION 4. (a) Requires THECB to adopt the rules required by Section 51.907(e-1), Education Code, as added by this Act, not later than June 1, 2018.

(b) Provides that the change in law made by this Act to Section 51.907, Education Code, applies beginning with the 2018 fall semester.

SECTION 5. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act to Sections 61.059 and 61.0595, Education Code, apply beginning with funding recommendations made under Section 61.059, Education Code, for the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2019.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2017.