

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
86R10081 SOS-F

H.B. 809  
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Higher Education  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

As foster care youth age out of the foster care system, they unfortunately find themselves without a permanent or stable place to live. While many of these young adults have the aptitude and the ambition to attend college, their higher education goals often fall by the wayside due to a lack of housing during their collegiate tenure. H.B. 809 will help Texas homeless students matriculate through college and become viable wage earners by ensuring that a (current or future) university liaison officer provide the students with information regarding the availability of support services such as on-campus and off-campus housing, food and meal programs, financial aid, and counseling services.

Public institutions of higher education in Texas currently provide campus foster care liaison officers to assist students who were formerly in foster care with obtaining information regarding support services for college readiness and student success efforts, pursuant to Section 51.9356 and Section 61.0908 of the Education Code. H.B. 809 would extend those same services to homeless students.

Section 51.978 of the Education Code currently requires public institutions of higher education to offer temporary housing between academic terms for students who were formerly in foster care. H.B. 809 amends Section 51.978 extends those same services to students who are deemed homeless. H.B. 809 defines "students who are homeless" to have the meaning under 42 USC Section 11434a and includes students who are homeless between academic terms.

H.B. 809 adds Section 51.9781 to the Education Code to require public institutions of higher education to give priority in the assignment of housing to students who are homeless.

This act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all members of each chamber. Otherwise, this act takes effect on September 1, 2019.

H.B. 809 amends current law relating to measures to assist students enrolled at public institutions of higher education who are homeless or who were formerly in foster care.

### **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 Section 51.9356, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 51.9356. New heading: DESIGNATION OF LIAISON OFFICER TO ASSIST STUDENTS WHO WERE FORMERLY IN FOSTER CARE OR WHO ARE HOMELESS. (a) Makes nonsubstantive changes and defines "students who are homeless" for purposes of this section.

(b) Requires each institution of higher education to designate at least one employee of the institution to act as a liaison officer for current and incoming:

(1) creates this subdivision from existing text and makes nonsubstantive changes;

(2) students who are homeless.

(c) Authorizes an institution of higher education to designate under Subsection (b) the same employee or employees to act as liaison officer for each student population described in that subsection or one or more different employees to act as liaison officer for each of those student populations separately. Requires a liaison officer to provide to the students for whom the officer is designated information regarding support services including financial aid, on-campus and off-campus housing, food and meal programs, and counseling services, other resources available to the students at the institution of higher education, and any other relevant information to assist the students, rather than requiring the liaison officer to provide to those students information regarding support services and other resources available to the students at the institution and any other relevant information to assist the students.

SECTION 2. Amends the heading to Section 51.978, Education Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 51.978. TEMPORARY HOUSING BETWEEN ACADEMIC TERMS FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS WHO WERE FORMERLY UNDER CONSERVATORSHIP OF DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES OR WHO ARE HOMELESS.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 51.978(a), Education Code, by adding Subdivision (3) to define "students who are homeless."

SECTION 4. Amends Section 51.978(b), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Requires a student, to be eligible to receive housing assistance from an institution of higher education under Subsection (c) (relating to requiring each institution of higher education to assist an eligible student in locating temporary housing for a certain period), to:

(1) be:

(A) creates this paragraph from existing text and makes nonsubstantive changes; or

(B) a student who is homeless; and

(2)–(4) makes no changes to these subdivisions.

SECTION 5. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.9781, as follows:

Sec. 51.9781. PRIORITY ACCESS TO STUDENT HOUSING FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE HOMELESS. (a) Defines "institution of higher education" and "students who are homeless" for purposes of this section.

(b) Requires each institution of higher education that maintains student housing facilities to give priority in the assignment of housing in those facilities to students who are homeless.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 61.0908, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 61.0908. New heading: DESIGNATION OF LIAISON OFFICER TO ASSIST STUDENTS WHO WERE FORMERLY IN FOSTER CARE OR WHO ARE

HOMELESS. (a) Defines "students who are homeless" and "homeless children and youths" for purposes of this section.

(b) Creates this subsection from existing text. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to designate at least one employee of THECB to act as a liaison officer for the following current and incoming students at institutions of higher education:

(1) creates this subdivision from existing text and makes nonsubstantive changes; and

(2) students who are homeless.

(c) Creates this subsection from existing text. Authorizes THECB to designate under Subsection (b) the same employee or employees to act as liaison officer for each student population described in that subsection or one or more different employees to act as liaison officer for each of those student populations separately. Requires a liaison officer to assist the students for whom the officer is designated in coordinating college readiness and student success efforts relating to the students, rather than requiring the liaison officer to assist in coordinating college readiness and student success efforts relating to those students.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.