

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 1677
By: Buckingham
Higher Education
4/14/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas higher education institutions are statutorily required to report data to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on a variety of measures for purposes of providing information, transparency, accountability, and support in making policy and institutional decisions. Although the collection and reporting of higher education is critical, there are circumstances in which reporting requirements are duplicative or redundant and over time, these reporting requirements create administratively inefficient processes for institutions and THECB.

S.B. 1677 seeks to streamline, limit, and reduce, where feasible, duplicative reporting requirements placed upon institutions of higher education via two methods. The first grants THECB the authority, by rule, to eliminate reporting requirements if there is already similar data being collected by THECB. The bill also eliminates two duplicative reporting requirements currently in statute, as proposed by a statutorily required negotiated rulemaking committee composed of institutional representatives.

The committee substitute repeals two additional reports:

Education Code Section 51.402(b) (Faculty Workloads and Services): This section deals with general policies and standard reports for academic faculty workloads and services, and requires institutions to include them in their operating budgets. These policies are posted on university and system webpages.

Government Code Section 659.026 (H.B. 12 Report): H.B. 12 (2013) was amended to include requirements for agencies to post on their websites information relating to staffing and salaries, including the number of employees employed by the agency, appropriations, compensation methodology for executive staff, and the average compensation of non-executive staff. The majority of this information is already collected and reported to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) and the State Auditor's Officer (SAO). A report to SAO regarding salary supplementation will continue to be collected.

C.S.S.B. 1677 amends current law relating to eliminating reporting and posting requirements for public institutions of higher education and other state agencies and the requirement for a plan by certain school districts to increase enrollment in public institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 2 (Section 61.0341, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.402(b), Education Code, to delete existing text requiring that the established rules and regulations of each institution of higher education be included in the operating budgets of each institution.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0341, as follows:

Sec. 61.0341. LIMITATION ON DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. (a) Provides that the legislature finds that data collection and reporting requirements for institutions of higher education are required to be limited and reduced to the extent feasible.

(b) Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), if the commissioner of higher education determines that THECB has access to an alternative means of collecting data or receiving information to be included in a report sufficient to fulfill a requirement under this code, to eliminate by rule the reporting requirement for that data or information.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 659.0201(b), Government Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Repealer: Section 29.904 (Plan to Increase Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education), Education Code.

Repealer: Section 51.4031 (Reports of Affordability and Access), Education Code.

Repealer: Section 659.026 (Information Regarding Staff Compensation), Government Code.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2021.