

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 937
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Veteran Affairs & Border Security
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

This Act changes the Education Code regarding excused absences at institutions of higher education due to a service member's military service. Currently, the statute only excuses absences due to active military service. Changing the statute in Section 51.9111 from "active" to "required" would cover service to the state on state active duty (SAD) orders, inactive drill time (IDT), and time served during annual training (AT). The Texas Military Department has over 23,000 service members who may be activated on a variety of missions, thus this change would help ensure those enrolled at institutions of higher education will be reasonably accommodated when they return to those institutions.

S.B. 937 amends current law relating to an excused absence from a public institution of higher education for a student called to required military service.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 4 of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 51.9111, Education Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 51.9111. EXCUSED ABSENCE FOR REQUIRED MILITARY SERVICE.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 51.9111(a)(2), Education Code, to define "required military service" rather than "active military service" in Section 51.9111.

SECTION 3. Amends Sections 51.9111(b) and (c), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that Section 51.9111 applies only if a student enrolled in an institution of higher education fails to attend classes or engage in other required activities because the student is called to required, rather than active, military service that is of a reasonably brief duration.

(c) Makes a conforming change to this subsection.

SECTION 4. (a) Provides that Section 51.9111, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with the 2021 fall semester.

(b) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to adopt or amend rules as necessary to implement Section 51.9111, Education Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.