

By: Gallego

H.B. No. 3135

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to a TEXAS grant pilot project to provide incentives for  
3 students to attend certain underutilized public institutions of  
4 higher education.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Subchapter M, Chapter 56, Education Code, is  
7 amended by adding Section 56.3011 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 56.3011. PILOT PROJECT TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR  
9 ATTENDANCE AT UNDERUTILIZED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. (a) The  
10 coordinating board shall establish a TEXAS grant pilot project as  
11 provided by this section to encourage students to attend eligible  
12 public institutions of higher education that offer extensive  
13 baccalaureate degree program options and that have sufficient  
14 facilities, administrative infrastructure, and faculty to serve  
15 additional students in order to reduce the need for this state to  
16 construct additional facilities or hire additional faculty at other  
17 institutions of higher education.

18 (b) From money available under Section 56.310 for purposes  
19 of this subchapter and money available under Section 56.464 for  
20 purposes of Subchapter Q, the coordinating board shall set aside  
21 sufficient money to provide TEXAS grants for the 2009-2010 and  
22 2010-2011 academic years to students who are initially eligible for  
23 a grant under Section 56.304 or 56.3041 in either of those years as  
24 follows:

1           (1) for a total of not more than 1,000 students  
2 enrolling for the first time at Angelo State University; and

3           (2) for a total of not more than 600 students enrolling  
4 for the first time at Sul Ross State University.

5           (c) To the extent money set aside under Subsection (b) is  
6 available for the purpose, a person awarded a grant as provided by  
7 Subsection (b) who continues to be eligible for a grant under  
8 Section 56.305 may receive a grant from the money set aside. If  
9 money set aside under Subsection (b) is not available to pay for a  
10 grant for a person awarded a grant as provided by Subsection (b) who  
11 continues to be eligible for a grant under Section 56.305, the  
12 person may receive a grant from the money available under Section  
13 56.310 on the same basis as other TEXAS grant applicants.

14           (d) A person awarded a grant under this section is eligible  
15 for financial aid under a federal program or program of an eligible  
16 institution to the extent authorized under that program.

17           (e) The coordinating board shall reallocate for grants  
18 under this subchapter or for loans under Subchapter Q, as  
19 applicable, any money set aside for purposes of the TEXAS grant  
20 pilot project that is not used in the academic year for which the  
21 money is set aside. Money reallocated under this subsection may be  
22 used at any eligible institution under this subchapter or  
23 Subchapter Q.

24           (f) Except as otherwise specifically provided by this  
25 section, this subchapter applies to a TEXAS grant awarded under  
26 this section.

27           (g) The coordinating board shall develop criteria for

1 evaluating the TEXAS grant pilot project and, based on that  
2 evaluation, not later than February 1, 2011, shall report to the  
3 82nd Legislature the coordinating board's recommendations  
4 concerning whether to continue, expand to other underutilized  
5 eligible public institutions of higher education, or discontinue  
6 the TEXAS grant pilot project.

7 (h) The coordinating board shall include in any board  
8 publication concerning financial aid on the board's Internet  
9 website information concerning the TEXAS grant pilot project  
10 established under this section.

11 SECTION 2. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
12 shall adopt rules to administer Section 56.3011, Education Code, as  
13 added by this Act, as soon as practicable after the date this Act  
14 takes effect. For that purpose, the board may adopt the initial  
15 rules in the manner provided by law for adoption of emergency rules.

16 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
17 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
18 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
19 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
20 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.