H.B. No. 3025

AN ACT
relating to measures to facilitate the timely completion of degrees
by students of public institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is
amended by adding Section 51.9685 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.9685. REQUIRED FILING OF DEGREE PLAN. (a) In this
section:

(1) "Degree plan" means a statement of the course of
study requirements that an undergraduate student at an institution
of higher education must complete in order to be awarded an
associate or bachelor's degree from the institution.

(2) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning
assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each
student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an
institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the
institution not later than the end of the second regular semester or
term immediately following the semester or term in which the
student earned a cumulative total of 45 or more semester credit
hours for coursework successfully completed by the student,
including transfer courses, international baccalaureate courses,
dual credit courses, and any other course for which the institution
the student attends has awarded the student college course credit,
including course credit awarded by examination.

   (c) A student to whom this section applies who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of higher education with 45 or more semester credit hours of course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a degree plan with the institution not later than the end of the student's second regular semester or term at the institution.

   (d) An institution of higher education shall provide to students to whom this section applies information regarding the degree plan filing requirement under this section and options for consulting with an academic advisor for that purpose, which may include consultation through electronic communication.

   (e) At each registration for a semester or term, a student who is required to have filed a degree plan under this section before that semester or term shall verify to the institution that:

       (1) the student has filed a degree plan with the institution; and

       (2) the courses for which the student is registering are consistent with that degree plan.

   (f) If a student to whom this section applies does not timely file a degree plan, the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled shall notify the student that the degree plan is required by law and require the student to consult with an academic advisor for that purpose in accordance with the consulting options under Subsection (d) during the semester or term in which the student receives the notice. The student may not obtain an official transcript from the institution until the
student has filed a degree plan with the institution.

(g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with institutions of higher education, may adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 61.833 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.833. CREDIT TRANSFER FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE. (a) In this section, "lower-division institution of higher education" means a public junior college, public state college, or public technical institute.

(b) This section applies to a student enrolled in a general academic teaching institution who:

(1) transferred to the institution from or previously attended a lower-division institution of higher education;

(2) earned at least 30 credit hours for course work successfully completed at the lower-division institution of higher education; and

(3) has earned a cumulative total of at least 90 credit hours for course work successfully completed.

(c) As soon as practicable after a student who is enrolled in a general academic teaching institution has met the criteria established by Subsection (b)(3), the institution by e-mail or other reasonable method shall request authorization from the student for the institution to release the student's transcript to the lower-division institution of higher education that the student previously attended for the purpose of determining whether the student has earned the credits required for an associate degree.
awarded by the lower-division institution of higher education. On receipt of a student's authorization under this subsection, the general academic teaching institution shall release the student's transcript to the lower-division institution of higher education.

(d) After receiving a student transcript from a general academic teaching institution under Subsection (c), a lower-division institution of higher education shall review the transcript and, if the lower-division institution of higher education determines the student has earned the credits required to receive an associate degree awarded by the lower-division institution of higher education, may award the student the degree.

SECTION 3. Section 51.9685, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with undergraduate students who initially enroll in a public institution of higher education for the 2012 fall semester.

SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act by adding Section 61.833, Education Code, applies to a student who not earlier than the 2011 fall semester transfers to or otherwise initially enrolls in a general academic teaching institution after attending a lower-division institution of higher education.

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.
I certify that H.B. No. 3025 was passed by the House on May 10, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 147, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; that the House refused to concur in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 3025 on May 27, 2011, and requested the appointment of a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the House adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 3025 on May 29, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.
H.B. No. 3025

I certify that H.B. No. 3025 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 25, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; at the request of the House, the Senate appointed a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the Senate adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 3025 on May 29, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

____________________________
Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: __________________
Date

____________________________
Governor