

By: Leman

H.B. No. 539

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to the automatic admission to general academic teaching  
3 institutions and eligibility for certain scholarships of a student  
4 who is the valedictorian of the student's high school graduating  
5 class.

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

7 SECTION 1. Section 51.803, Education Code, is amended by  
8 adding Subsection (d-1) and amending Subsection (h) to read as  
9 follows:

10 (d-1) In addition to admissions required under Subsection  
11 (a), each general academic teaching institution shall admit an  
12 applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate  
13 student if the applicant graduated as the valedictorian of the  
14 student's high school graduating class in one of the two school  
15 years preceding the academic year for which the student is applying  
16 for admission and satisfies the requirements of Subsections (a)(1)  
17 through (3). Subsection (b) applies to an applicant for admission  
18 under this subsection.

19 (h) An institution that admits under this section an  
20 applicant qualified for automatic admission under Subsection (a) or  
21 (d-1) may admit the applicant for either the fall semester of the  
22 academic year for which the applicant applies or for the summer  
23 session preceding that fall semester, as determined by the  
24 institution.

1 SECTION 2. Section 56.484, Education Code, is amended to  
2 read as follows:

3 Sec. 56.484. INITIAL ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOLARSHIP. To be  
4 eligible for a scholarship under this subchapter, a student must:

5 (1) have graduated from a public or accredited private  
6 high school in this state while ranked in the top 10 percent or as  
7 the valedictorian of the student's graduating class, subject to  
8 Section 56.487(b);

9 (2) have completed the recommended or advanced high  
10 school curriculum established under Section 28.025 or its  
11 equivalent;

12 (3) have applied for admission as a first-time  
13 freshman student for the 2010-2011 academic year or a subsequent  
14 academic year to an institution of higher education that has  
15 elected to offer admissions for that academic year to applicants as  
16 provided by Section 51.803(a-1);

17 (4) enroll as a first-time freshman student in an  
18 institution of higher education not later than the 16th month after  
19 the date of the student's high school graduation;

20 (5) have been awarded a TEXAS grant under Subchapter M  
21 for the same semester or other academic term for which the  
22 scholarship will be awarded;

23 (6) be a Texas resident under Section 54.052; and

24 (7) comply with any other eligibility requirements  
25 established by coordinating board rule.

26 SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act to Section  
27 51.803, Education Code, apply beginning with admissions to a

1 general academic teaching institution for the 2019-2020 academic  
2 year. Admissions to a general academic teaching institution for an  
3 academic year before that academic year are governed by the law in  
4 effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the  
5 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

6 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act to Section  
7 [56.484](#), Education Code, applies beginning with scholarships  
8 awarded for the 2019-2020 academic year. Scholarships awarded for  
9 an academic year before that academic year are governed by the law  
10 in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the  
11 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

12 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
14 provided by Section [39](#), Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.