



## KEY BILLS PASSED BY 83<sup>RD</sup> TEXAS LEGISLATURE

### Workforce Development, Certification & Alignment

#### **SB 441 - Sen. Birdwell**

Relating to the establishment of the Texas Fast Start Program to promote rapid delivery of workforce education and development. This bill directs the Texas Workforce Commission to establish and administer a new career and technical program that helps students earn certifications and enter into the workforce quickly. **Companion: HB 834 – Rep. J. Davis**

#### **HB 809 – Rep. J. Davis**

Relating to the dissemination of information regarding employment opportunities in this state to secondary school students. Seeks to establish a process whereby TWC provides information regarding available careers and salaries in Texas to the Texas Education Agency, which then provides the information to school districts for use in planning and implementing career and technical education and training programs.

#### **HB 842 – Rep. Bell**

Relating to requiring public school districts to provide certain opportunities to career and technical students under the college credit program. This bill would require public school districts to provide a career and technical student the opportunity to earn the credit necessary to obtain an industry-recognized credential or certificate or an associate degree concurrently with the student's high school diploma.

#### **HB 1296 – Rep. Alvarado**

Relating to information regarding postsecondary education and career opportunities and workforce needs in this state. The bill seeks to provide information concerning Texas' projected workforce needs through a collaboration with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Workforce Commission, and other state agencies. C.S.H.B. 1296 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to prepare information comparing institutions of higher education in Texas and to post the information on TEA's Internet website. The bill requires the information to be given to a public school student who requests the information and requires the information to identify postsecondary education and career opportunities; compare each institution of higher education with other institutions regarding the relative cost of tuition, retention and graduation rates, student debt, loan repayment rates, and employment rates; identify Texas' future workforce needs; and include certain annual wage information. The bill requires TEA to collaborate with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to obtain the information and requires TEA to incorporate the use of existing materials and develop new materials to be provided to counselors, students, and parents regarding institutions of higher education.

#### **HB 1297 – Rep. Alvarado**

Relating to the review of certain skills development fund workforce training programs. H.B. 1297 seeks to increase the knowledge community and technical colleges have on the effectiveness of the programs

and training offered at the institutions in improving the socioeconomic circumstances of participants who complete the programs and to identify strategies for improving the delivery of workforce training in order to more effectively impact economic development in Texas.

**[HB 2478](#) – Rep. Alvarado**

Relating to the collection, analysis, and reporting of certain job and skills shortage information by the Texas Workforce Commission. Bill based on recommendation from the Select Committee on Manufacturing’s Interim Report. Requires the Texas Workforce Commission to compile information on job and skill shortages within certain industries and among socio economic categories then report to the Legislature for ensuring workforce needs in the state are met.

**[HB 3028](#) – Rep. J. Davis**

Relating to the use of the skills development fund to support certain joint credit courses offered by school districts under agreements with public junior colleges. Under this bill money from the skills development fund may be awarded to a public junior college to be used under an agreement with a school district to support courses offered for joint high school and public junior college credit or offered under a college credit career or technical education program that leads to an industry-recognized license, credential, or certificate. Appropriate uses of money awarded under this subsection include purchasing or repairing necessary equipment for a course and developing a course curriculum.

**[HCR 82](#) – Rep. Hunter**

Requesting the creation of a joint interim committee to study education policy as it relates to developing a skilled workforce.

**Adult Education**

**[SB 307](#) – Sen. Huffman**

Relating to the transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Workforce Commission. **Companion: HB 362 Rep. Guillen**

**[SB 1142](#) – Sen. Duncan**

Relating to an adult high school diploma and industry certification charter school pilot program for adults 19 to 50 years of age. Bill would create an adult education charter school pilot program for approximately 150 adults between the ages of 19 to 50 who dropped out of high school and want receive a high school diploma as opposed to a GED. **Companion: HB 1831, Rep. J. Davis**

**Primary & Secondary Education**

**[SB 2](#) – Sen. Patrick**

Relating to certain charter schools. The bill would amend the cap on the total number of open enrollment charters that may be issued by the state, increasing it by 10 charters in each fiscal year through FY2020, after which the cap would be set at 275. The bill would allow the State Board of Education (SBOE) to grant charters, subject to the cap, for entities operating charters in other states that meet certain performance requirements, certain charters that primarily serve students with disabilities, and certain charters serving as dropout recovery programs.

### **[HB 5](#) – Rep. Aycock**

Relating to public school accountability, including assessment, and curriculum requirements. Would overhaul how the state's public schools are rated and the number of tests required to graduate high school while allowing for specialized diplomas. HB5 is designed to instill more flexibility in public education by enabling students to either pursue a traditional path into colleges and universities or move directly into the workforce. It would reduce the number of end-of-course exams from 15 to five and eliminate a requirement that the test results constitute 15 percent of a student's overall grade.

### **Higher Education**

#### **[HB 2760](#) - Rep. Branch**

Relating to partnerships between the Texas State Technical College System and public junior colleges. HB 2760 adds a new subchapter to Chapter 135 (Texas State Technical College System) of the Education Code to clarify TSTC's authority to enter into partnerships with other institutions of higher education for the purpose of propagating advanced and emerging technical education. This legislation is intended to enhance TSTC's ability to serve specific local workforce needs by partnering with community and junior colleges to provide technical education programs whenever such partnerships enhance the availability and/or the quality of technical education.

**Companion: SB 922, Sen. Birdwell**

### **Drug Testing**

#### **[SB 21](#) – Sen. Williams**

Relating to drug screening or testing as a condition for the receipt of unemployment compensation benefits by certain individuals. This legislation amends the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act by adding a drug-testing eligibility requirement for applicants to receive unemployment compensation benefits. The Texas Workforce Commission would not be testing all applicants, but only those who fail a pre-screen test and work in certain identified industries. Claimants who refuse drug testing or fail such tests would be barred from receiving unemployment insurance benefits until the individual passes a test at least four weeks after the date of the failed test. **Companion: HB 1281, Rep. Creighton**

### **Veterans Affairs**

#### **[SB 242](#) – Sen. Corona**

Relating to the eligibility requirements for certain occupational licenses issued to applicants with military experience.

SB 242 will expand the practice of crediting military service to all the occupational licenses that are overseen by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. Currently TDLR credits verified air conditioning and refrigeration military experience toward the licensing requirements under Section 1302.255 (Eligibility Requirements), Occupations Code.

### **TWC/Workforce Board Operations**

#### **[SB 920](#) – Sen. Eltife**

Relating to the requirement that an unemployed individual be actively seeking work to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Recent federal laws mandate that states codify a work search requirement, and there is concern that failure to make this change could result in the state losing federal funding for the administration of the unemployment insurance program. SB 920 seeks to make the necessary changes to state law to ensure that the federal funding continues.

#### **[HB 376](#) –Rep. Strama**

Relating to the regulation of childcare providers by TWC and local workforce boards. Would require local boards to establish graduated reimbursement rates for child care based on TWC's Rising Star program. The minimum reimbursement rate for a Texas Rising Star Program provider must be greater than the maximum rate established for a provider who is not a Texas Rising Star Program provider for the same category of care. **Companion: SB 1588, Sen. Zaffirini**

#### **[HB 939](#) – Rep. J. Davis**

Relating to repealing the employment and training investment assessment; changing the rate of certain unemployment taxes.

#### **[HB 3005](#) – Rep. Burkett**

Relating to the authority of the Texas Workforce Commission to use certain unemployment compensation funds for reemployment activities. Would enable TWC, under an agreement with or waiver by the United States secretary of labor, to use money requisitioned from this state's account in the federal trust fund to conduct demonstration projects for the reemployment of unemployed.

### **Career & Technology Education**

#### **[SB 860](#) – Sen. Lucio**

Relating to the provision of career and technology education courses in certain partnership programs to provide high school dropout recovery. S.B. 860 affords junior colleges an additional and cost-effective resource by clarifying that participating public junior colleges may partner with public technical institutes to comply with the program's requirement to provide career and technology coursework. The bill clarifies that public technical institutes may receive a negotiated amount from the partnering public junior college for courses taught. As proposed, S.B. 860 amends current law relating to the provision of career and technology education courses in certain partnership programs to provide high school dropout recovery. **Companion: HB 1784, Rep. Farney**

#### **[HB 437](#) – Rep. J. Davis**

Relating to career and technical education programs. This bill removes non---profit organizations as an entity eligible for grant funding under the Jobs and Education for Texans Grant Program (JET).