



STATE LEGISLATION UPDATE February 27, 2015

State Appropriations

[SB 2](#) – Sen. Nelson

Senate general appropriations bill. Includes provisions for the transfer of programs from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Filed, Received by Secretary of Senate

Primary & Secondary Education

[SB 149](#) – Sen. Seliger

Relating to the creation of individual graduation committees for certain high school students. Bill would require, for students who fail to perform satisfactorily on an end-of-course assessment instrument a second time, the school district or open-enrollment charter school that the student attends to establish an individual graduation committee to determine whether the student qualifies to graduate.

Status: Filed, Received by the Secretary of the Senate

[HB 4](#) – Rep. Huberty et al

Relating to a high quality prekindergarten program provided by public school districts. The bill provides additional state funding for districts that agree to adopt a number of policies — including regular teacher training, limits on class size and certain curriculum standards — in their pre-kindergarten programs, as well as a "parent engagement plan." Only districts offering full-day programs would be eligible.

Status: Filed

[HB 181](#) – Rep. Bell, Rep. Krause

Relating to information printed by school districts on high school diplomas. Bill would eliminate the inclusion of endorsements, performance acknowledgements and distinguished level of achievement on high school diplomas.

Status: Filed

[HB 256](#) – Rep. Howard

Relating to use of compensatory education allotment funding to provide assistance with child care to students at risk of dropping out of school. Bill would provide funds provide child-care services or assistance with child-care expenses for students at risk of dropping out of school, or pay the costs of day care or associated transportation provided through a life skills program.

Status: Filed

[HB 1100](#) – Rep. E. Johnson, Rep. Farney

Relating to a gold standard full-day prekindergarten program provided by public school districts. Bill would create an incentive payment system for school districts offering full-day pre-kindergarten.

Status: Filed

[HB 1843](#) – Rep. Aycock

Relating to providing training academies for public school teachers who provide reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade three. A literacy achievement academy developed under this section must include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Status: Filed

[HB 1869](#) – Rep. Isaac

Relating to courses or other activities offered by public schools for certain industry-recognized credentials or certificates. Amends language to the Education Code to include training relating to federal occupational safety laws and rules; and codes and standards adopted by any recognized national code organization.

Status: Filed

[HB 1892](#) – Rep. Eddie Rodriguez

Relating to the establishment of a community school grant program. The bill would establish a competitive grant program to assist public elementary, middle, junior high, and high schools in developing community school plans and transitioning into community schools.

Status: Filed

Higher Education

[HB 298](#) – Rep. Wu

Relating to measures to facilitate the transfer, academic progress, and timely graduation of students in public higher education. Would require certain higher education institutions to publish on the institution's Internet website a detailed description of the learning objectives, content, and prior knowledge requirements for at least 12 courses offered by the institution for which credit is frequently transferred to the institution from lower-division institutions of higher education; establishes articulation agreements with public junior colleges.

Status: Filed

[HB 505](#) – Rep. E. Rodriguez

Relating to a prohibition of limitations on the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a public high school student may enroll.

Status: Filed

[HB 1384](#) – Rep. S. Davis, Rep. Pena

Relating to authorization by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for certain public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs.

Status: Filed

Post-Secondary Education

[HB 1809](#) – Rep. Naishtat

Relating to creation of an employment-first task force advisory committee. The bill would establish an advisory committee to make recommendations for increasing and expanding postsecondary educational opportunities and access for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. It also would call for research into existing programs in and model programs outside this state.

Status: Filed

Economic Development

HB 292 – Rep. Stephenson

Relating to authorizing development corporations to finance projects to support primary job training facilities and programs at certain educational institutions.

Status: Filed

HB 1155 – Rep. Alvarado

Relating to the creation of the Recruit Texas Program to facilitate the relocation to or expansion in this state of employers offering complex or high-skilled employment opportunities. Bill would create the Recruit Texas program which would provide rapid response workforce development services to employers who are looking to expand or move to Texas.

Status: Filed

HB 1156 – Rep. Alvarado

Relating to the establishment of an electronic information and application system for state and local incentives for economic development purposes. Bill would create a single integrated web portal where a company considering moving to or expanding in Texas can fill out a uniform application that will automatically list the incentives that they pre-qualify for. At the same time, the portal will send the application to the proper state and local officials for further customized incentive packages and consultations.

Status: Filed

Career and Technology Education

HB 1157 – Rep. Alvarado

Relating to funding for public school career and technology education programs. Bill focuses on funding and eligibility for career and technology education programs (CTE) that will better equip students for steady, well-paying jobs that will properly prepare them for life after graduation. It would increase CTE funding to ensure programs are adequately funded and broaden the grades for which school districts can receive funding for CTE programs to include seventh and eighth grade students.

Status: Filed

Labor Market and Career Information

HB 1287 – Rep. Simmons

Relating to a requirement that each state university's Internet website include a link to certain employment data. Requires each general academic teaching institution other than a public state college to maintain in a prominent location on the institution's Internet website a link to the Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics ("Texas CREWS").

Status: Filed

TANF/SNAP

HB 1258 – Rep. S. King

Relating to the eligibility for supplemental nutrition assistance benefits for certain persons who owe delinquent child support. Bill would disqualify an individual from receiving SNAP Benefits if the person is delinquent on their child support payments. It would permanently ban a person who fails to meet the program's work requirements for the third time without good cause. The bill would only apply to able-bodied adults without dependents and who are required to work in order to receive food stamps.

Status: Filed

[HB 1267](#) – Rep. S. Thompson

Relating to the eligibility of certain persons for the supplemental nutrition assistance program. Bill addresses TANF/SNAP eligibility provisions for persons convicted of a felony offense that has as an element of the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance.

Status: Filed

Veterans Affairs

[SB 508](#) – Sen. Jose Rodriguez

Relating to the employment of veterans by a public entity or public work of this state. Bill would reduce the required percentage of total workforce comprised of veterans at a state agency from 40 percent to 20 percent before the agency is not required to give veterans employment preference at the agency.

Status: Filed, Received by Secretary of the Senate

[HB 754](#) – Rep. Menendez

Relating to the employment of individuals qualified for a veteran's employment preference.

Status: Filed

[HB 757](#) – Rep. Menendez (*companion SB 806*)

Relating to the College Credit for Heroes program. Bill would require a report by November 1 of this year on the results of any grants awarded under College Credit For Heroes program, the best practices for veterans and military service members to achieve maximum academic or workforce education credit at institutions of higher education, and other related measures needed to facilitate the entry of trained, qualified veterans and military service members into the workforce.

Status: Filed

TWC/Workforce Board Operations

[HB 1712](#) – Rep. Oliveira

Relating to the establishment of an Innovative Workforce Training Center in the Rio Grande Valley. Bill would establish the Innovative Workforce Training Center to develop and provide initial and continuing education and training for workers; administered by Texas Southmost College in Brownsville.

Status: Filed

Workforce Development, Certification & Alignment

[SB 209](#) -- Sen. Hinojosa, et al

Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Workforce Investment Council, including assumption of the duties of the Texas Skill Standards Board. Bill adds language to the reauthorization of the Texas Workforce Investment Council to develop a statewide system of industry-defined and Industry-recognized skill standards and credentials for all major skilled occupations and abolishing the Texas skills Standards Board.

Status: Filed, Received by Secretary of Senate

[HB 1606](#) – Rep. Burkett

Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Workforce Investment Council, including assumption of the duties of the Texas Skill Standards Board.