

HB 2611 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/9, 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires that dental and vision benefits be included in health care benefits available to part-time faculty members at public institutions of higher education. Modifies eligibility level from 50 to 30 percent of level worked by full-time equivalent employee. Requires that hours worked by part-time faculty include hours not associated with instructing students. Requires public institutions of higher education to notify all part-time faculty members of eligibility requirements, available health care benefits and associated costs, and instructions to apply. Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission agency request budget to include sufficient amount to provide health care benefits to part-time faculty members. Applies requirements to health care benefits offered to part-time faculty members starting 2023-2024 academic year. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Interpretation of benefits available in SB 551 (2021)
- Variance in eligibility processes across institutions

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Replaces the measure. Requires that dental and vision benefits be included in health care benefits available to part-time faculty members at public institutions of higher education. Sets eligibility for part-time faculty health benefits as eligibility for membership in Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) or other state retirement plan. Requires public institutions of higher education to notify all part-time faculty members of eligibility requirements, available health care benefits and associated costs, and instructions to apply. Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission agency request budget to include sufficient amount to provide health care benefits to part-time faculty members.

BACKGROUND:

Starting with the passage of House Bill 2557 (2009), part-time faculty at institutions of higher education were eligible for health care benefits if they were also eligible for membership in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Senate Bill 551 (2021) modified part-time faculty's access to employer-provided health care benefits, in part by changing eligibility for health benefits from PERS or other retirement plan membership to working at least half of the full-time equivalent at a given institution. Senate Bill 1522 (2022) allowed the calculation of eligibility to use an average of full-time equivalence.

House Bill 2611 includes dental and vision benefits in health care benefits available to part-time faculty at public institutions of higher education, lowers eligibility level from 50 to 30 percent of level worked by full-time equivalent employees, requires that hours worked include hours not instructing students, and requires colleges and universities to notify public employees of health care benefits and eligibility requirements.