



# Testimony

## HB 4383

### *Testimony in Support Before the Texas House Higher Education Committee*

by Thomas K. Lindsay, PhD, Distinguished Senior Fellow of Higher Education & Constitutional Studies

Chairman Murphy and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom Lindsay. I represent the Texas Public Policy Foundation, which I serve as senior distinguished fellow in higher education and constitutional studies. I am testifying in favor of the bill.

In my view, this is a worthy bill. It simply seeks to provide full transparency regarding fixed-rate tuition costs. This is the same sort of honest disclosure of all costs that we have come to expect when we buy cell phones, cars, and homes.

As I read the bill, it simply requires that any Texas university that offers a fixed tuition rate program shall provide “information explaining the effect of the program on the calculation of a student’s cost per credit hour, including the institution’s current fixed tuition rate, and clearly describing the amount of tuition a student would pay for varying course loads covered by the program.”

This transparency would also be offered to transfer students and would include full information on costs to the student under the program in every semester or term billing statement. The bill would also call for this information to be provided on the schools’ external websites and in all financial aid information provided to students.

Specifically, HB 4383 would require schools to “provide information explaining the effect of the fixed tuition price plan on the calculation of a student’s cost per credit hour, including the institution’s current fixed tuition rate, and clearly describing the amount of tuition a student would pay for varying course loads covered by the plan.”

In sum, this bill’s disclosure requirement would help to create better-informed consumers of higher education. We see from experience the benefits that accrue when consumers are better informed. This will benefit our students and Texas higher education overall. ★

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Thomas Lindsay, PhD**, is the distinguished senior fellow of higher education & constitutional studies at the Foundation. Lindsay is the former director of the National Endowment for the Humanities’ (NEH) signature initiative, We the People, which supports teaching and scholarship in American history and culture. He was later named deputy chairman and chief operating officer of the NEH. Lindsay co-authored the American government college textbook *Investigating American Democracy* with Gary Glenn, published by Oxford University Press. Lindsay earned a PhD and MA in political science and government from the University of Chicago and a BA *summa cum laude* in political science from Northern Illinois University.

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