

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Budget Subcommittee on Higher Education Appropriations

BILL: CS/SB 654

INTRODUCER: Higher Education Committee and Senator Oelrich

SUBJECT: Student Fees

DATE: March 11, 2011 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Harkey</u>	<u>Matthews</u>	<u>HE</u>	Fav/CS
2.	<u>Davis</u>	<u>Spalla</u>	<u>TR</u>	Favorable
3.	<u>Bryant</u>	<u>Hamon</u>	<u>BHI</u>	Favorable
4.	_____	_____	<u>BC</u>	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please see Section VIII. for Additional Information:

A. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE..... Statement of Substantial Changes

B. AMENDMENTS..... Technical amendments were recommended

Amendments were recommended

Significant amendments were recommended

I. Summary:

This bill authorizes the board of trustees of Santa Fe College to establish a transportation access fee if the fee is approved by a referendum held by student government. The fee may not exceed \$6.00 per credit hour. The fee would not be covered by the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

This bill amends ss. 1009.22 and 1009.23, Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

College Fees

Sections 1009.22 and 1009.23, F.S., authorize community college boards of trustees to charge tuition and specified fees for postsecondary workforce education students and community college students. A community college may not charge any fee except as authorized by law. Community colleges do not have statutory authority to charge transportation access fees.

University Transportation Access Fees

Under s. 1009.24(14), F.S., state universities are authorized to charge transportation access fees. An example of how a university may use the transportation access fee can be seen in the way in

which the University of Florida and the City of Gainesville entered into an interlocal agreement. The goal of the agreement was to mitigate the impact of university transportation related issues, specifically by taking cars off the road and by reducing the demand for on-campus parking. To accomplish this goal, the university has contracted with Gainesville's Regional Transportation System (RTS) to provide students unlimited access to the city bus system. At the end of October 2010, RTS had provided 9 million rides in the preceding fiscal year, amounting to a daily ridership of almost 50,000. When school is in session, approximately 75 percent of the daily riders are university students. A committee of students and administrators assist RTS in determining which routes and service will be included in each annual contract. Through this negotiation, the level and frequency of service are funded through a fee that students and administrators agree upon. Service ranges from higher levels that provide a bus every 10 to 15 minutes to lower levels that provide a bus every 30 minutes. Several intercampus routes allow students, faculty, and staff to travel from one part of campus to another. In general, hours of service are from 6:00 am to 2:00 am. According to the Board of Governors, the 2010-2011 transportation access fee at the University of Florida is \$7.33 per credit hour. The university anticipates that the fee will increase to \$7.88 in August 2011.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill authorizes the board of trustees of Santa Fe College to establish a transportation access fee for postsecondary workforce education students and community college students if the fee is approved by a referendum held by the student government. The fee could not exceed \$6.00 per credit hour. Revenues from the transportation access fee could only be used for the provision or improvement of access to transportation services for students. An increase in the fee could only occur once each year and would have to be implemented in the fall term. The fee would not be covered by the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The fee could assist the college in mitigating the effect of transportation related issues by taking cars off the road and reducing the demand for on-campus parking.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

If Santa Fe College imposed the transportation access fee, students at the college would have to pay the fee. The fee is capped at \$6.00 per credit hour.

C. Government Sector Impact:

According to the Department of Education, based on the 2010-11 FTE-1A Report, including workforce education students, an estimated total of 378,890 credit hours of instruction will be provided by Santa Fe College during the year. If the college assessed the fee at the maximum amount of \$6 per credit hour, the estimated revenues would be \$2,243,340.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Higher Education on February 8, 2011:

The committee substitute authorizes the board of trustees of Santa Fe College to establish a transportation access fee if the fee is approved by a referendum held by the student government.

B. Amendments:

None.