

**SENATOR JEFF WENTWORTH**  
SENATE DISTRICT 25

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**The Senate of  
The State of Texas**

February 13, 2004

**RQ-0184-GA**

**COMMITTEES**

Government Organization, Vice Chairman  
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Intergovernmental Relations

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SENATE DISTRICT 25**

Bexar (north)	Hays
Comal	Kendall
Guadalupe	Travis (south)

**RECEIVED**

**FEB 18 2004**

**OPINION COMMITTEE**

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Attorney General of Texas  
Attn: Opinion Committee  
P.O. Box 12548  
Austin, Texas 78711-2548

FILE # ML-43505-01  
I.D. # 43505

**Re: Does the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Government Code, apply to a student fee advisory committee established under the provisions of Section 54.5031, Education Code?**

**Dear General Abbott:**

The purpose of this letter is to request an opinion on whether the Texas Open Meetings Act applies to a student fee advisory committee established under the provisions of Section 54.5031 of the Education Code.

Section 54.5031, Education Code, provides that a student fee advisory committee is established at each institution of higher education in the state except for The University of Texas at Austin. The committee is responsible for providing the governing board and administration of the institution with advice on the type, amount, and expenditure of compulsory fees for student services under Section 54.503, Education Code. Subsection (g) of Section 54.5031, Education Code requires the president of an institution of higher education to consider the report and recommendations of the fee committee before recommending the student fee budget to the governing board of the institution.

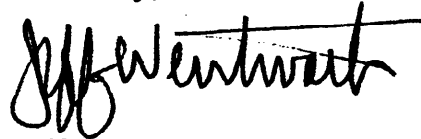


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Section 551.002, Government Code, requires every regular, special, or called meeting of a governmental body to be open to the public except for certain limited situations when executive sessions are allowed. The general definition of governmental body in Section 551.002(3)(A), Government Code is a board, commission, department, committee, or agency within the executive or legislative branch of state government that is directed by one or more elected or appointed members.

I respectfully request an opinion on whether a student fee advisory committee is considered to be a governmental body for purposes of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Wentworth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Jeff Wentworth

Chairman

Senate Jurisprudence Committee

JW/ml