

By: Christian

H.B. No. 2919

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 2919:

By: Wong

C.S.H.B. No. 2919

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation and operation of a Texas Certified Retirement Community Program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter L, Chapter 481, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 481.175 to read as follows:

Sec. 481.175. TEXAS CERTIFIED RETIREMENT COMMUNITY PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "program" means the Texas Certified Retirement Community Program.

(b) The department shall, after appropriate research has been conducted, establish and maintain a Texas Certified Retirement Community Program in which retirees and potential retirees are encouraged to make their homes in Texas communities that have met the criteria for certification by the department as a Texas certified retirement community. In support of the program, the department shall identify issues of interest to retirees or potential retirees to inform those persons of the benefits of living in Texas. Issues of interest to retirees or potential retirees may include:

(1) Texas' state and local tax structure;

(2) housing opportunities and cost;

(3) climate;

(4) personal safety;

(5) working opportunities;

1           (6) health care services and other services along the  
2 continuum of care, including home-based and community-based  
3 services, housing for the elderly, assisted living, personal care,  
4 and nursing care facilities;

5           (7) transportation;

6           (8) continuing education;

7           (9) leisure living;

8           (10) recreation;

9           (11) the performing arts;

10          (12) festivals and events;

11          (13) sports at all levels; and

12          (14) other services and facilities that are necessary  
13 to enable persons to age in the community and in the least  
14 restrictive environment.

15          (c) During the preliminary, research phase of the program,  
16 the department shall consult with the Office of Rural Community  
17 Affairs to establish rural parameters for program certification.

18          (d) The mission of the program is to:

19           (1) promote this state as a retirement destination to  
20 retirees and potential retirees both in and outside of Texas;

21           (2) assist Texas communities in their efforts to  
22 market themselves as retirement locations and to develop  
23 communities that retirees would find attractive for a retirement  
24 lifestyle;

25           (3) assist in the development of retirement  
26 communities and life-care communities for economic development  
27 purposes and as a means of providing a potential workforce and

1 enriching Texas communities; and

2 (4) encourage tourism to Texas in the form of mature  
3 market travel to Texas in reference to retirement desirability for  
4 the future and for the visitation of those who have chosen to retire  
5 in Texas.

6 (e) The department shall coordinate the development and  
7 planning of the program with the governor, the Office of Rural  
8 Community Affairs, and any other state or local entity interested  
9 in participating in and promoting the program.

10 (f) To obtain certification as a Texas certified retirement  
11 community, the following criteria must be met:

12 (1) a resolution endorsing the local retirement  
13 recruitment effort must be adopted by the governing body of the  
14 applicable local political subdivision;

15 (2) the program must have an official sponsoring  
16 organization that fulfills the duties described by Subsection (g);

17 (3) a hospital and emergency medical services must be  
18 readily accessible to the community;

19 (4) the community must maintain information on both  
20 resale housing and rental housing to ensure that the quantity is  
21 sufficient to meet the needs of potential new retiree residents;  
22 and

23 (5) the community must conduct a retiree desirability  
24 assessment that emphasizes appropriate factors, including medical  
25 services, adult education opportunities, shopping, recreation,  
26 cultural opportunities, safety, aging services, and other services  
27 along a continuum of care, including home-based and community-based

1 services, housing for the elderly, assisted living, personal care,  
2 and nursing care facilities.

3 (g) An official sponsoring organization shall:

4 (1) develop a community profile similar to that used  
5 by chambers of commerce, to include facts regarding crime  
6 statistics, tax information, recreational opportunities, and  
7 housing availability;

8 (2) appoint an individual who will be accountable to  
9 the community and to the state; and

10 (3) commit a minimum of \$10,000 each year for the local  
11 program.

12 (h) Each local political subdivision must have a general  
13 retiree attraction committee and a minimum of four subcommittees as  
14 follows:

15 (1) a community inventory/assessment subcommittee,  
16 which shall conduct an unbiased inventory and assessment of whether  
17 the community can offer the basics that retirees demand and develop  
18 a professional portfolio containing brief biographies of  
19 professionals in the community;

20 (2) a community relations/fund-raising subcommittee,  
21 which shall locate retirees living in the community, act as  
22 salespersons for the program, raise money necessary to run the  
23 program, recruit subcommittee members, organize special events,  
24 and promote and coordinate the program with local entities;

25 (3) a marketing and promotion subcommittee, which  
26 shall establish a community image, evaluate target markets, develop  
27 and distribute promotional material, and coordinate advertising

1 and public relations campaigns; and

2 (4) an ambassadors subcommittee, which shall serve as  
3 the first contact with prospective retirees, provide tours and tour  
4 guides when prospects visit the community, respond to inquiries,  
5 log contacts made, invite prospects to special community events,  
6 and maintain continual contact with prospects until the time the  
7 prospects make a retirement location decision.

8 (i) A retiree attraction committee shall:

9 (1) submit a marketing plan detailing the mission, the  
10 target market, the competition, an analysis of the community's  
11 strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and the  
12 strategies the program will employ to attain its goals;

13 (2) work to gain the support of churches, clubs,  
14 businesses, and the local media, as necessary for the success of the  
15 program; and

16 (3) submit a commitment and long-term plan as  
17 described by Subsection (k).

18 (j) During the certification process, a representative of  
19 the retirement attraction committee shall attend state training  
20 meetings.

21 (k) Before certification is awarded, the retiree attraction  
22 committee shall submit a written three-year commitment to the  
23 program and a long-term plan outlining steps the community will  
24 undertake to maintain its desirability as a destination for  
25 retirees. The long-term plan must outline plans to correct any  
26 facility and service deficiencies identified in the retiree  
27 desirability assessment required by Subsection (f)(5). The written

1 commitment and long-range plan shall be forwarded to the  
2 department.

3 (1) Not later than the 90th day after the date of  
4 certification, the governing body of a local political subdivision  
5 shall submit a complete retiree attraction package to the  
6 department.

7 (m) On the certification of a community as a Texas certified  
8 retirement community under this section, the department shall  
9 provide the following assistance to the community:

10 (1) assistance in the training of local staff and  
11 volunteers;

12 (2) ongoing oversight and guidance in marketing, plus  
13 updates on national retirement trends;

14 (3) inclusion in the state's national advertising and  
15 public relations campaigns and travel show promotions, including a  
16 prominent feature on the department's Internet website;

17 (4) eligibility for state financial assistance for  
18 brochures, support material, and advertising; and

19 (5) an annual evaluation and progress assessment on  
20 maintaining and improving the community's desirability as a home  
21 for retirees.

22 (n) The department shall adopt rules to implement this  
23 section.

24 SECTION 2. The Texas Department of Economic Development  
25 shall implement the program created by Section 481.175, Government  
26 Code, as added by this Act, not later than September 1, 2004.

27 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.