

Amend CSSB 1863 by adding to the bill an appropriately numbered article to read as follows and by renumbering the other articles of the bill accordingly:

ARTICLE _____. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES; MENTORING INITIATIVE

SECTION _____.01. Subtitle I, Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 535 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 535. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNT

Sec. 535.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Account" means the renewing our communities account.

(2) "Community-based organization" means a nonprofit corporation or association that is located in close proximity to the population the organization serves.

(3) "Faith-based organization" means a nonprofit corporation or association that:

(A) is operated through a religious or denominational organization, including an organization that is operated for religious, educational, or charitable purposes and that is operated, supervised, or controlled, wholly or partly, by or in connection with a religious organization; or

(B) clearly demonstrates through the organization's mission statement, policies, or practices that the organization is guided or motivated by religion.

Sec. 535.002. CONSTRUCTION. This chapter may not be construed to:

(1) exempt a faith- or community-based organization from any applicable state or federal law; or

(2) be an endorsement or sponsorship by this state of the religious character, expression, beliefs, doctrines, or practices of a faith-based organization.

Sec. 535.003. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAW. A power authorized or duty imposed under this chapter must be performed in a manner that is consistent with 42 U.S.C. Section 604a.

Sec. 535.004. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNT. (a) The renewing our communities account is an account in the general revenue fund that may be appropriated only to the commission for the

purposes and activities authorized by this chapter and for reasonable administrative expenses under this chapter.

(b) The account consists of:

(1) all money appropriated for the purposes of this chapter;

(2) any gifts, grants, or donations received for the purposes of this chapter; and

(3) interest earned on money in the account.

(c) The account is exempt from the application of Section 403.095.

(d) The purposes of the account are to:

(1) increase the capacity of and strengthen faith- and community-based organizations to provide charitable services to persons in this state who are in need of those services;

(2) assist local governmental entities in establishing local offices for faith- and community-based initiatives;

(3) foster better partnerships between state government and faith- and community-based organizations to provide charitable services to persons in this state; and

(4) leverage state and local resources to acquire federal or private grant funds to provide charitable services in this state.

Sec. 535.005. POWERS AND DUTIES REGARDING ACCOUNT. (a) The commission shall:

(1) develop and implement a competitive process for awarding grants from the account that is consistent with state law and includes objective selection criteria;

(2) oversee the delivery of training and other assistance activities under this chapter;

(3) develop criteria limiting awards of grants under Subsection (b)(1) to small and medium-sized faith- and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state;

(4) establish general state priorities for the account; and

(5) establish and monitor performance and outcome

measures for persons to whom grants are awarded under this chapter.

(b) The commission may:

(1) award grants from the account to faith- and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state for capacity-building purposes;

(2) directly, or through agreements with one or more entities that serve faith- and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state:

(A) assist faith- and community-based organizations with:

(i) writing or managing grants through workshops or other forms of guidance;

(ii) obtaining legal assistance related to forming a corporation or obtaining an exemption from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code; and

(iii) obtaining information about or referrals to entities that provide expertise in accounting, legal, or tax issues, program development matters, or other organizational topics;

(B) provide information or assistance to faith- and community-based organizations related to building the organizations' capacity for providing services;

(C) facilitate the formation of networks, the coordination of services, and the sharing of resources among faith- and community-based organizations;

(D) in cooperation with existing efforts, if possible, conduct needs assessments to identify gaps in services in a community that present a need for developing or expanding services;

(E) work with faith- and community-based organizations to identify the organizations' needs for improvements in their internal capacity for providing services; and

(F) provide faith- and community-based organizations with information on and assistance in identifying or using best practices for delivering charitable services to persons, families, and communities and in replicating charitable services programs that have demonstrated effectiveness;

(3) award grants from the account to local governmental entities to provide seed money for local offices for faith- and community-based initiatives;

(4) assist a local governmental entity in creating a better partnership between government and faith- and community-based organizations to provide charitable services to persons in this state;

(5) use the account to provide matching money for federal or private grant programs that further the purposes of the account as described by Section 535.004(d); and

(6) contract with the governor's office of faith-based and community initiatives to administer programs or perform duties or activities under this chapter.

Sec. 535.006. FAITH- AND COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) The executive commissioner shall appoint faith and community leaders in this state to serve on the faith- and community-based initiatives advisory committee. The advisory committee members must be representative of the religious and cultural diversity of this state.

(b) The advisory committee shall make recommendations to the executive commissioner regarding the executive commissioner's powers and duties with respect to the account as described by Section 535.005.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, the advisory committee shall meet at least twice each calendar year. The advisory committee is not required to meet if the remaining amount appropriated from the account to the commission for the state fiscal biennium is insufficient for the performance of any duties or activities under this chapter.

(d) Chapter 2110 does not apply to the advisory committee.

(e) The advisory committee is subject to Chapter 551.

SECTION __.02. Chapter 401, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter G to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER G. TEXAS MENTORING INITIATIVE

Sec. 401.151. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE OF TEXAS MENTORING INITIATIVE. (a) The office of the governor shall establish the Texas mentoring initiative to fund activities that:

(1) create or expand mentoring opportunities in this state;

(2) promote responsible fatherhood and healthy marriages; and

(3) increase the capacity of faith- and community-based organizations, as defined by Section 535.001, to provide mentoring and other charitable services to persons in this state.

(b) The office of the governor shall administer the Texas mentoring initiative subject to the availability of funds appropriated for that purpose.

Sec. 401.152. GRANTS. The office of the governor shall provide grants through the Texas mentoring initiative to support:

(1) activities described in Section 401.151; and

(2) the renewing our communities account under Chapter 535.