

By: Keffer of Eastland, Frost,
Cook of Navarro

H.B. No. 1747

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 1747:

By: Cook of Navarro

C.S.H.B. No. 1747

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of and funding for the Texas
Entrepreneurship Network.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle F, Title 4, Government Code, is amended
by adding Chapter 490 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 490. TEXAS ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK

Sec. 490.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Entrepreneur participant" means an individual
who has a business or an idea for a business and registers with the
network.

(2) "Fund" means the Texas Entrepreneurship Network
fund.

(3) "Network" means the Texas Entrepreneurship
Network.

Sec. 490.002. ESTABLISHMENT OF NETWORK. (a) The Texas
Entrepreneurship Network is established to develop and diversify
the economy of this state through:

(1) the provision of programs and services to
facilitate the growth and success of entrepreneurs; and

(2) the statewide, results-driven collaboration of
public and private entities to create jobs and energize sustainable
local economies through the development of entrepreneurs in this
state.

1 (b) The Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship shall:

2 (1) operate the network under an agreement with the
3 Department of Agriculture and as provided by this chapter; and

4 (2) comply with all reasonable and customary oversight
5 measures required by the Department of Agriculture.

6 Sec. 490.003. MEMBERS OF NETWORK. (a) The founding members
7 of the network are:

8 (1) the Texas Cooperative Extension of The Texas A&M
9 University System;

10 (2) the IC2 Institute at The University of Texas at
11 Austin;

12 (3) the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural
13 Resources at Texas Tech University;

14 (4) the Department of Agriculture;

15 (5) the Texas Workforce Commission;

16 (6) the Office of Rural Community Affairs;

17 (7) the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship; and

18 (8) the Texas Economic Development Council.

19 (b) An institution of higher education, chamber of
20 commerce, economic development corporation, business, or
21 organization with an interest in promoting entrepreneurship may
22 join the network.

23 Sec. 490.004. ADVISORY BOARD. (a) The Texas Center for
24 Rural Entrepreneurship shall establish an advisory board to guide
25 and advise the operations of the network.

26 (b) The advisory board consists of one representative from
27 each of the founding members of the network under Section

1 490.003(a), and at least one member from the private sector. An
2 organization other than a founding member of the network under
3 Section 490.003(a) may have a representative on the advisory board
4 only if the creation of an additional seat on the board is
5 authorized by a two-thirds majority vote of the existing board.

6 (c) The initial advisory board shall adopt provisions to
7 determine the terms of board members and stagger the members'
8 terms, and other provisions necessary to administer the board.

9 (d) Advisory board members serve without compensation but
10 are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in
11 traveling to meetings related to the network.

12 Sec. 490.005. GENERAL DUTIES AND GOALS. (a) The network
13 shall train and refocus existing state and local resources to build
14 a more prosperous, dynamic, and sustainable economy throughout this
15 state by:

16 (1) providing coordinated training and services that
17 enhance the value of the state's existing infrastructure
18 investments and make the investments available to entrepreneur
19 participants;

20 (2) developing a statewide network of
21 entrepreneurship developers and entrepreneurship centers as
22 provided by Section 490.006;

23 (3) developing a comprehensive network of knowledge,
24 leadership, and financial capital resources accessible through the
25 network's entrepreneurship developers and entrepreneurship
26 centers;

27 (4) educating entrepreneur participants and

1 generating awareness of the network and its programs;

2 (5) identifying the most promising ventures through
3 activities, including business-plan competitions, and assisting
4 the ventures' potential for job and wealth creation;

5 (6) developing evaluation methods to measure the
6 effectiveness of the network and the impact of entrepreneurship on
7 local and regional economies;

8 (7) developing best practices for successful
9 entrepreneurship and applied research regarding critical success
10 factors for entrepreneurial businesses to provide a strategic
11 competitive advantage for businesses in this state; and

12 (8) collaborating with existing local, state, and
13 federal agencies and economic development professionals to use the
14 strengths and assets of the agencies and professionals.

15 (b) The network shall work locally, regionally, and
16 statewide with educators, agencies, organizations, networks,
17 businesses, economic developers, consultants, communities,
18 researchers, or other persons to develop and support strategies to
19 assist entrepreneur participants and improve the environment for
20 entrepreneurial development in this state.

21 Sec. 490.006. ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERVICES. (a) The network
22 shall develop a statewide association of local individuals who are
23 entrepreneurship developers trained to analyze, evaluate, and
24 develop business plans and help local entrepreneur participants
25 start, grow, or develop their businesses.

26 (b) The network may establish local entrepreneurship
27 centers in every county practicable, at which an entrepreneur

1 participant may access programs, necessary support, and online
2 resources provided and developed by the network. In establishing
3 the entrepreneurship centers, the network shall use existing
4 infrastructure, public and private organizations, and other
5 resources, including chambers of commerce, universities and
6 community colleges, county extension offices, Texas Workforce
7 Commission offices, and local business offices.

8 (c) The network shall adopt requirements for
9 entrepreneurship centers. An organization must meet the
10 requirements adopted under this subsection before hosting an
11 entrepreneurship center.

12 (d) A group of individuals who have services, resources, or
13 expertise to offer entrepreneur participants may agree to provide
14 services through the network as an entrepreneurship force.

15 Sec. 490.007. NETWORK PROGRAMS. The network may develop:

16 (1) programs for:

17 (A) business plan development, competitive
18 enhancement, and management skills development;

19 (B) entrepreneurship best practices training;

20 (C) entrepreneurship education in primary and
21 secondary schools and community colleges;

22 (D) expanding entrepreneurship in workforce
23 development programs;

24 (E) accessing sources of start-up and growth
25 capital;

26 (F) training and assisting entrepreneurship
27 agents who facilitate and assist entrepreneurial efforts; and

1 (G) community readiness preparation and
2 evaluation, and community planning;

3 (2) methods for helping entrepreneur participants
4 access other loan, guarantee, and grant programs;

5 (3) necessary policies and regulations; and

6 (4) collaborations with other entities.

7 Sec. 490.008. TEXAS ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK FUND. (a)
8 The Texas Entrepreneurship Network fund is an account in the
9 general revenue fund. The Department of Agriculture shall
10 administer the fund.

11 (b) The following amounts shall be deposited in the fund:

12 (1) any amounts appropriated by the legislature for
13 the fund; and

14 (2) gifts, grants, and other donations received for
15 the fund.

16 (c) The fund may be used only for network purposes, subject
17 to Section 490.009.

18 (d) The network may solicit and accept gifts and grants for
19 the fund from public and private universities and all other public
20 and private entities.

21 Sec. 490.009. USE OF FUND. Money appropriated to the fund
22 by the legislature shall be used for:

23 (1) programs related to local entrepreneurship
24 centers, training, and entrepreneurship developers;

25 (2) curriculum development, infrastructure, data
26 management, and research;

27 (3) technology and economic development research

1 centers of excellence;

2 (4) the network's overhead expenses; and

3 (5) other activities necessary to accomplish the

4 mission of this chapter.

5 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.