

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3443
By: Howard, Donna
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Texas, like most other states, continues to face a registered nurse shortage that is projected to worsen without legislative intervention. The purpose of C.S.H.B. 3443 is to establish a new Texas Hospital-Based Nursing Education Partnership Grant Program to increase the number of nurses in Texas by fostering innovation through partnership models, leveraging existing expertise and infrastructure in both practice and academia, and expanding nursing education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 and SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: Chapter 61 of the Education Code is amended by adding Subchapter EE to create the Texas Hospital-Based Nursing Education Partnership Grant Program. Defines "hospital-based nursing education partnership," and "nursing education program." Establishes the Texas hospital-based nursing education partnership grant program. Provides that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (board) shall administer the program in accordance with this subchapter and rules adopted under this subchapter.

Provides that under the program, the board shall make grants to hospital-based nursing education partnerships to assist those partnerships to meet the state's needs for registered nurses by increasing the number of nursing education program graduates through innovative instruction through collaboration between hospitals and nursing education programs and the use of the existing expertise and facilities of those hospitals and programs.

Provides that the board may make a grant under this subchapter to a hospital-based nursing education partnership only if the board determines that certain conditions are met.

Provides that in establishing the cost-comparison criteria under this subchapter, the board shall exclude reasonable development and initial implementation costs for the infrastructure necessary to support a hospital-based nursing education partnership that meets certain provisions.

Requires a hospital-based nursing education partnership to return to the board money granted to the partnership under this subchapter that the partnership does not spend on eligible costs. Provides that as the board determines appropriate to best achieve the purposes of these programs, the board may use the money to make grants to other hospital-based nursing education partnerships; use the money to make grants under the professional nursing shortage reduction program established; or transfer the money to the permanent fund for higher education nursing, allied health, and other health-related programs established for use in making grants.

Provides that in awarding a grant under this subchapter, the board shall give priority to a hospital-based nursing education partnership that submits a proposal that meets certain provisions.

Provides that in addition to money appropriated by the legislature, the board may solicit, receive, and spend grants, gifts, and donations from any public or private source for the purposes stated. States that the board shall adopt rules for the administration of the Texas hospital-based nursing education partnership grant program. Requires the rules to include provisions relating to

applying for a grant under this subchapter and standards of accountability to be met by any hospital-based nursing education partnership awarded a grant under this subchapter.

Requires the board and the Board of Nurse Examiners to establish a single application process under which a hospital-based nursing education partnership may apply both for approval as a pilot program under a certain section and for a grant under this subchapter. Provides that each hospital-based nursing education partnership that receives a grant under this subchapter shall submit to the board an annual report that includes information required by board rule, including information concerning the extent to which during the reporting period the partnership has complied with accountability standards established.

SECTION 2: Provides that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall adopt rules for the implementation and administration of the program created by this Act as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3: Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute removes Sec. 61.9750. PURPOSE. from the original bill.

The substitute removes definitions for "Board," "Hospital," and "Institution of Higher Education," and adds definitions for "Hospital-based nursing education partnership" and "Nursing education program"

The substitute provides that in establishing the program, the Board shall administer the program in accordance with rules adopted in a specific subchapter of the bill. The substitute provides that the board shall make grants to hospital-based nursing education partnerships, rather than to hospitals which was indicated in the original bill, and makes conforming changes to reflect this change in language.

The substitute changes the heading of Section 61.9753 to include the words "conditions" and "limitations" to the heading. The substitute adds certain provisions relating to the criteria for a hospital-based nursing education partnership to qualify for a grant. The substitute provides that in establishing the cost-comparison criteria, the board shall exclude reasonable development and initial implantation costs for the infrastructure necessary to support a hospital-based nursing education partnership.

The substitute adds certain provisions for grant spending options. The substitute removes language from the original bill and adds a requirement that unspent grant money must be returned and provides certain requirements for unspent grant money. The substitute gives priority for funding to partnerships with a signed memorandum of understanding or other written agreement in which they agree to comply with certain standards.

The substitute also gives priority to partnerships that include a demonstrable education model to increase the number of students enrolled in, the number of students graduating from, and the number of nursing faculty employed by each nursing education program participating in the partnership; improve student retention in each nursing education program; indicates the availability of money to match all or a portion of the grant money, including matching money from a hospital, private or non-profit entity or institution of higher education; show that the program can be replicated by other partnerships or programs; and include plans for sustainability beyond the end of the grant period.

The substitute replaces Sec. 61.9755. ADMINISTRATION. in the original bill with Sec. 61.9755. GRANTS, GIFT, AND DONATIONS. The substitute replaces Sec. 61.9756 ANNUAL REPORT. in the original bill with new Sec. 61.9756. RULES. The substitute creates

Sec. 61.9757. APPROVAL AS NURSING EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM. The substitute creates Sec. 61.9758. ANNUAL REPORT. The substitute inserts new SECTION 2 which explicitly grants rule authority to the board and adds new SECTION 3 providing the effective date.

The substitute makes other clarifying, conforming, non-substantive and technical changes.