

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 365
By: Nelson
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, Texas has a healthcare workforce shortage and a lack of diversity within the existing healthcare workforce. This problem can be addressed by allowing nontraditional students to enter health care professional programs.

S.B. 365 authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to award grants to assist schools by offering distance and community-based education programs and to appoint a committee to advise THECB on strategies to encourage more distance learning or community-based education programs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: Amends Chapter 61 of the Education Code by adding Subchapter FF titled Health Professional Education Grant Program. Defines "eligible health professional education program."

Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (board) to award health professional education grants to eligible health professional education programs at institutions of higher education to assist the programs in providing new distance learning or community-based education projects or activities or expanding or enhancing existing distance learning or community-based education projects or activities, and to fund other related activities. Provides that the board may not award a grant under this section to replace current funding for an existing distance learning or community-based education project or activity. Provides that a grant awarded may be used only for a purpose described.

Provides that the board may appoint an advisory committee to advise the board on successful strategies for assisting eligible health professional education programs in providing, expanding, or enhancing distance learning or community-based education projects or activities. Provides that at the end of each academic year for which an eligible health professional education program is awarded a grant and in the form the board requires, the program shall provide to the board a written report regarding the use of the grant. Provides that not later than October 31 of each year, the board shall provide to the governor and the legislature a written report consolidated from the reports submitted to the board.

SECTION 2: Provides that beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall award grants under the health professional education grant program created under Subchapter FF, Chapter 61 of the Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3: Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This takes effect September 1, 2007.

S.B. 365 80(R)

