

By: Guillen

H.B. No. 2164

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a technology center grant program for rural counties.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 487, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter P to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER P. RURAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 487.701. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "rural border county" means a county that:

(1) is located within the South Texas region adjacent to an international border; and

(2) has a population of not more than 57,000.

Sec. 487.702. GRANT PROGRAM. (a) Subject to available funds, the executive committee shall establish a grant program under which the office awards grants to public institutions of higher education, public high schools, and governmental entities located in a rural border county for the development and operation of multi-institutional technology centers that provide:

(1) community access to technology;

(2) computer literacy programs;

(3) educational programs designed to provide concurrent enrollment credit for high school students taking postsecondary courses in information and emerging technologies;

(4) training for careers in technology-related fields

1 and other highly skilled industries; and

2 (5) technology-related continuing and adult education
3 programs.

4 (b) The executive committee by rule shall establish:

5 (1) eligibility criteria for grant applicants;

6 (2) grant application procedures;

7 (3) guidelines relating to grant amounts;

8 (4) procedures for evaluating grant applications; and

9 (5) procedures for monitoring the use of grants
10 awarded under the program and for ensuring compliance with the
11 conditions of a grant.

12 Sec. 487.703. FUNDING. The office may seek, receive, and
13 spend money received through an appropriation, grant, donation, or
14 reimbursement from any public or private source to implement this
15 subchapter.

16 SECTION 2. Not later than October 1, 2007, the executive
17 committee of the Office of Rural Community Affairs shall establish
18 the rural technology center grant program required by Subchapter P,
19 Chapter 487, Government Code, as added by this Act, and the Office
20 of Rural Community Affairs shall award the first grants under that
21 program not later than January 1, 2008.

22 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.