

By: Deshotel

H.B. No. 1181

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT  
2 relating to abolishing the Texas Department of Rural Affairs and  
3 transferring its functions to the Texas Department of Housing and  
4 Community Affairs, Department of State Health Services, and  
5 Department of Agriculture.

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

7 SECTION 1. Section 38.060(a), Education Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 (a) This section applies only to a school-based health  
10 center serving an area that:

11 (1) is located in a county with a population not  
12 greater than 50,000; or

13 (2) has been designated under state or federal law as:

14 (A) a health professional shortage area;

15 (B) a medically underserved area; or

16 (C) a medically underserved community by the  
17 ~~[Texas]~~ Department of State Health Services ~~[Rural Affairs]~~.

18 SECTION 2. Sections 51.918(a) and (c), Education Code, are  
19 amended to read as follows:

20 (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the  
21 ~~[Texas]~~ Department of State Health Services ~~[Rural Affairs]~~,  
22 medical schools, nursing schools, and schools of allied health  
23 sciences shall cooperate to improve and expand programs for rural  
24 areas.

1 (c) The [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
2 ~~Affairs~~] shall develop relief service programs for rural physicians  
3 and allied health personnel to facilitate ready access to  
4 continuing medical education as well as to provide practice  
5 coverage for purposes other than continuing medical education.

6 SECTION 3. Section 58.007(b)(1), Education Code, is amended  
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The Primary Care Residency Advisory Committee is  
9 created and shall consist of 12 members as follows:

10 (A) seven members shall be licensed physicians,  
11 one appointed by each of the following:

12 (i) the Texas Medical Association;

13 (ii) the Texas Osteopathic Medical  
14 Association;

15 (iii) the Texas Academy of Family  
16 Physicians;

17 (iv) the Texas Society of the American  
18 College of Osteopathic Family Physicians;

19 (v) the Texas Society of Internal Medicine;

20 (vi) the Texas Pediatric Society; and

21 (vii) the Texas Association of  
22 Obstetricians and Gynecologists;

23 (B) one member shall be appointed by the [~~Texas~~]  
24 Department of State Health Services [~~Rural Affairs~~];

25 (C) one member shall be appointed by the Bureau  
26 of Community Oriented Primary Care at the Department of State  
27 Health Services; and

1 (D) three members shall be members of the public,  
2 one appointed by each of the following:

- 3 (i) the governor;  
4 (ii) the lieutenant governor; and  
5 (iii) the speaker of the house of  
6 representatives.

7 SECTION 4. Section 61.0899, Education Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 Sec. 61.0899. ASSISTANCE IN CERTAIN RURAL HEALTH CARE LOAN  
10 REIMBURSEMENT AND STIPEND PROGRAMS. The board shall, in  
11 cooperation with the [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services  
12 [~~Rural Affairs~~] and the department's advisory panel established  
13 under Section 487.552, Government Code, ensure that the board seeks  
14 to obtain the maximum amount of funds from any source, including  
15 federal funds, to support programs to provide student loan  
16 reimbursement or stipends for graduates of degree programs in this  
17 state who practice or agree to practice in a medically underserved  
18 community.

19 SECTION 5. Section 403.1065(c), Government Code, is amended  
20 to read as follows:

21 (c) The available earnings of the fund may be appropriated  
22 to the [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural Affairs~~]  
23 for the purposes of Subchapter H, Chapter 487.

24 SECTION 6. Section 405.021(c), Government Code, is amended  
25 to read as follows:

26 (c) The secretary of state shall compile information  
27 received from [~~the Office of Rural Community Affairs,~~] the Texas

1 Water Development Board, the Texas Transportation Commission, the  
2 Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Department  
3 of State Health Services, the Texas Commission on Environmental  
4 Quality, the Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas  
5 Cooperative Extension, councils of governments, an institution of  
6 higher education that receives funding from the state for projects  
7 that provide assistance to colonias, and any other agency  
8 considered appropriate by the secretary of state for purposes of  
9 the classification system.

10 SECTION 7. Section 481.0215(b), Government Code, is amended  
11 to read as follows:

12 (b) At the direction of the governor, the executive director  
13 of the department or its successor shall work with each state agency  
14 that administers a program relating to job training or job  
15 creation, including the Texas Workforce Commission, the Council on  
16 Workforce and Economic Competitiveness, the Department of  
17 Agriculture, and the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
18 [~~Office of Rural~~] Affairs, to address the challenges facing the  
19 agencies relating to job training and job creation.

20 SECTION 8. The heading to Chapter 487, Government Code, is  
21 amended to read as follows:

22 CHAPTER 487. PROGRAMS AFFECTING [~~TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF~~] RURAL  
23 COMMUNITIES [~~AFFAIRS~~]

24 SECTION 9. Section 487.051, Government Code, is amended to  
25 read as follows:

26 Sec. 487.051. POWERS AND DUTIES OF TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF  
27 HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. (a) In this section, "department"

1 means the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

2 (b) The department shall:

3 (1) assist rural communities in the key areas of  
4 economic development, community development, [~~rural health,~~] and  
5 rural housing;

6 (2) serve as a clearinghouse for information and  
7 resources on [~~all~~] state and federal programs affecting economic  
8 development, community development, and housing in rural  
9 communities;

10 (3) in consultation with rural community leaders,  
11 locally elected officials, state elected and appointed officials,  
12 academic and industry experts, and the interagency work group  
13 created under this chapter, identify and prioritize policy issues  
14 and concerns relating to economic development, community  
15 development, and housing affecting rural communities in the state;

16 (4) make recommendations to the legislature to address  
17 the concerns affecting rural communities identified under  
18 Subdivision (3);

19 (5) monitor developments relating to economic  
20 development, community development, and housing that have a  
21 substantial effect on rural Texas communities, especially actions  
22 of state government, and compile an annual report describing and  
23 evaluating the condition of rural communities;

24 (6) administer the federal community development  
25 block grant nonentitlement program;

26 (7) [~~administer programs supporting rural health care~~  
27 ~~as provided by this chapter,~~

1           ~~[(8)]~~ perform research to determine the most  
2 beneficial and cost-effective ways to improve the welfare of rural  
3 communities; and

4           (8) ~~[(9)] ensure that the department qualifies as the~~  
5 ~~state's office of rural health for the purpose of receiving grants~~  
6 ~~from the Office of Rural Health Policy of the United States~~  
7 ~~Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. Section~~  
8 ~~254r;~~

9           ~~[(10)] manage the state's Medicare rural hospital~~  
10 ~~flexibility program under 42 U.S.C. Section 1395i-4;~~

11           ~~[(11)]~~ seek state and federal money available for  
12 economic development in rural areas for programs under this  
13 chapter[+]

14           ~~[(12)] in conjunction with the Department of~~  
15 ~~Agriculture, regularly cross-train department employees with~~  
16 ~~employees of the Department of Agriculture regarding the programs~~  
17 ~~administered and services provided by each agency to rural~~  
18 ~~communities; and~~

19           ~~[(13)] work with interested persons to assist volunteer~~  
20 ~~fire departments and emergency services districts in rural areas].~~

21           ~~[(b)] The department may require department employees who~~  
22 ~~work at locations other than the central office to be based in~~  
23 ~~Department of Agriculture offices.]~~

24           SECTION 10. Subchapter C, Chapter 487, Government Code, is  
25 amended by adding Sections 487.0511 and 487.0512 to read as  
26 follows:

27           Sec. 487.0511. POWERS AND DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1 HEALTH SERVICES. (a) In this section, "department" means the  
2 Department of State Health Services.

3 (b) The department shall:

4 (1) assist rural communities in the area of rural  
5 health;

6 (2) serve as a clearinghouse for information and  
7 resources on all state and federal programs affecting rural health;

8 (3) in consultation with rural community leaders,  
9 locally elected officials, state elected and appointed officials,  
10 academic and industry experts, and the interagency work group  
11 created under this chapter, identify and prioritize policy issues  
12 and concerns affecting rural health in the state;

13 (4) make recommendations to the legislature to address  
14 the concerns affecting rural communities identified under  
15 Subdivision (3);

16 (5) monitor developments that have a substantial  
17 effect on rural health, especially actions of state government, and  
18 compile an annual report describing and evaluating the condition of  
19 rural communities;

20 (6) administer programs supporting rural health care  
21 as provided by this chapter;

22 (7) perform research to determine the most beneficial  
23 and cost-effective ways to improve health care in communities;

24 (8) ensure that the department qualifies as the  
25 state's office of rural health for the purpose of receiving grants  
26 from the Office of Rural Health Policy of the United States  
27 Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. Section

1 254r;

2 (9) manage the state's Medicare rural hospital  
3 flexibility program under 42 U.S.C. Section 1395i-4; and

4 (10) work with interested persons to assist volunteer  
5 fire departments and emergency services districts in rural areas.

6 Sec. 487.0512. POWERS AND DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OF  
7 AGRICULTURE. (a) In this section, "department" means the  
8 Department of Agriculture.

9 (b) The department shall:

10 (1) assist rural communities regarding renewable  
11 energy and water projects;

12 (2) serve as a clearinghouse for information and  
13 resources on renewable energy and water projects in rural  
14 communities;

15 (3) in consultation with rural community leaders,  
16 locally elected officials, state elected and appointed officials,  
17 academic and industry experts, and the interagency work group  
18 created under this chapter, identify and prioritize policy issues  
19 and concerns affecting renewable energy and water projects in rural  
20 communities in the state;

21 (4) make recommendations to the legislature to address  
22 the concerns affecting rural communities identified under  
23 Subdivision (3); and

24 (5) monitor developments that have a substantial  
25 effect on rural Texas communities, especially actions of state  
26 government, and compile an annual report describing and evaluating  
27 renewable energy and water projects in rural communities.



1 SECTION 11. Section 487.053, Government Code, is amended to  
2 read as follows:

3 Sec. 487.053. GIFTS AND GRANTS. [~~(a)~~] The Texas Department  
4 of Housing and Community Affairs, Department of State Health  
5 Services, and Department of Agriculture [~~department~~] may accept  
6 gifts, grants, and donations from any organization for the purpose  
7 of funding any activity under this chapter, and the departments  
8 [~~department~~] shall actively seek funding from appropriate  
9 nonprofit foundations.

10 [~~(b) All gifts, grants, and donations must be accepted in an~~  
11 ~~open meeting by a majority of the voting members of the board and~~  
12 ~~reported in the public record of the meeting with the name of the~~  
13 ~~donor and purpose of the gift, grant, or donation.]~~

14 SECTION 12. Sections 487.054(a) and (b), Government Code,  
15 are amended to read as follows:

16 (a) At least once each year, the following agency heads or  
17 their designees shall meet in Austin to discuss rural issues and to  
18 provide information showing the impact each agency has on rural  
19 communities for use in developing rural policy and compiling the  
20 annual reports [~~report~~] under Sections 487.051(b)(5),  
21 487.0511(b)(5), and 487.052(b)(5) [~~Section 487.051(a)(5)~~]:

- 22 (1) the commissioner of agriculture;
- 23 (2) the executive director of the Public Utility  
24 Commission of Texas;
- 25 (3) the director of the Texas AgriLife [~~Agricultural~~]  
26 Extension Service;
- 27 (4) the executive director of the Texas Department of

- 1 Housing and Community Affairs;
- 2           (5) the commissioner of the Department of State Health
- 3 Services;
- 4           (6) the executive administrator of the Texas Water
- 5 Development Board;
- 6           (7) the executive director of the Parks and Wildlife
- 7 Department;
- 8           (8) the commissioner of higher education;
- 9           (9) the comptroller;
- 10          (10) the executive director of the Texas Department of
- 11 Transportation;
- 12          (11) the executive director of the Texas Commission on
- 13 Environmental Quality;
- 14          (12) the executive director of the Texas Economic
- 15 Development and Tourism Office;
- 16          (13) the commissioner of insurance;
- 17          (14) the commissioner of the Department of Aging and
- 18 Disability Services;
- 19          (15) the commissioner of education;
- 20          (16) the executive commissioner of the Health and
- 21 Human Services Commission;
- 22          (17) the executive director of the Texas Workforce
- 23 Commission;
- 24          (18) the executive director of the Texas Historical
- 25 Commission;
- 26          (19) a member of the Railroad Commission of Texas;
- 27          (20) the executive director of the State Soil and

1 Water Conservation Board; and

2 (21) [~~the executive director of the department; and~~  
3 [~~22~~] the head of any other agency interested in  
4 rural issues.

5 (b) The commissioner of agriculture [~~board~~] shall call the  
6 annual meeting. The commissioner of agriculture [~~board~~] shall set  
7 the time and date of the meeting after consulting with the agency  
8 heads listed in Subsection (a).

9 SECTION 13. Section 487.0541(c), Government Code, is  
10 amended to read as follows:

11 (c) The work group shall meet at the call of the  
12 commissioner of agriculture [~~executive director of the~~  
13 ~~department~~].

14 SECTION 14. Section 487.056, Government Code, is amended to  
15 read as follows:

16 Sec. 487.056. REPORT TO LEGISLATURE. (a) Not later than  
17 January 1 of each odd-numbered year, the Texas Department of  
18 Housing and Community Affairs, Department of State Health Services,  
19 and Department of Agriculture [~~department~~] shall each submit a  
20 biennial report to the legislature regarding that agency's [~~the~~  
21 ~~activities of the department, the~~] activities [~~of the Texas Rural~~  
22 ~~Foundation,~~] and any findings and recommendations relating to rural  
23 issues. The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs  
24 shall include in its report the activities of the Texas Rural  
25 Foundation.

26 (b) The Department of State Health Services [~~department~~]  
27 shall obtain information from each county about indigent health

1 care provided in the county and information from each university,  
2 medical school, rural community, or rural health care provider that  
3 has performed a study relating to rural health care during the  
4 biennium. The department shall include the information obtained  
5 under this subsection in the department's report to the  
6 legislature.

7 (c) The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs  
8 [~~department~~] shall obtain information on the availability of  
9 housing in rural communities throughout the state for all income  
10 levels. The department shall include the information, and the  
11 department's assessment of the information, in the department's  
12 report to the legislature.

13 SECTION 15. Section 487.057(a), Government Code, is amended  
14 to read as follows:

15 (a) The Department of State Health Services [~~department~~]  
16 shall develop, implement, and update a rural health work plan.

17 SECTION 16. Sections 487.059(b), (c), and (e), Government  
18 Code, are amended to read as follows:

19 (b) If a member of the governing board of a state agency  
20 described by Subsection (c) [~~the board~~] or a committee established  
21 under this chapter, including an advisory committee, has a  
22 financial interest in an entity that applies for a monetary award,  
23 the board or committee member shall, before a vote on the monetary  
24 award, disclose the fact of the board or committee member's  
25 financial interest. The board or committee shall enter the  
26 disclosure into the minutes of the meeting at which a vote on the  
27 monetary award is taken. The board or committee member may not

1 vote on or otherwise participate in a discussion or any other  
2 activity that relates to awarding the monetary award. If the board  
3 or committee member does not comply with this subsection, the  
4 entity is not eligible for the monetary award.

5 (c) If the executive director or another [~~department~~]  
6 employee of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs,  
7 Department of State Health Services, or Department of Agriculture  
8 has a financial interest in an entity that applies for a monetary  
9 award, the executive director or employee:

10 (1) shall, as soon as possible, disclose to the  
11 governing board of the agency [~~board~~] the fact of the director's or  
12 employee's financial interest;

13 (2) may not participate in staff evaluations regarding  
14 the monetary award; and

15 (3) if the executive director or employee under the  
16 agency's [~~department~~] procedures may vote, or make a recommendation  
17 concerning a vote, on a matter that involves the monetary award:

18 (A) shall disclose the fact of the director's or  
19 employee's financial interest before a vote on the monetary award,  
20 which the board or committee shall enter into the minutes of the  
21 meeting at which a vote on the monetary award is taken; and

22 (B) may not vote on or otherwise participate in a  
23 discussion or any other activity that relates to awarding the  
24 monetary award.

25 (e) Subsections (f) and (g) apply only to a member of the  
26 board or a committee who is employed by:

27 (1) an entity that offers to enter into a contract with

1 the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Department  
2 of State Health Services, or Department of Agriculture  
3 ~~[department]~~; or

4 (2) an entity that is under common ownership or  
5 governance with or otherwise affiliated with an entity that applies  
6 for a monetary award or offers to enter into a contract with the  
7 Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Department of  
8 State Health Services, or Department of Agriculture ~~[department]~~.

9 SECTION 17. Section 487.060(a), Government Code, is amended  
10 to read as follows:

11 (a) In this section:

12 (1) "Colonia [~~,"colonia]~~" means a geographic area  
13 that:

14 (A) [~~(1)~~] is an economically distressed area as  
15 defined by Section 17.921, Water Code;

16 (B) [~~(2)~~] is located in a county any part of  
17 which is within 62 miles of an international border; and

18 (C) [~~(3)~~] consists of 11 or more dwellings that  
19 are located in close proximity to each other in an area that may be  
20 described as a community or neighborhood.

21 (2) "Department" means the Texas Department of Housing  
22 and Community Affairs.

23 SECTION 18. Section 487.061(a), Government Code, is amended  
24 to read as follows:

25 (a) The Department of State Health Services ~~[department]~~  
26 shall establish a program to provide interested rural communities  
27 with:

- 1           (1) general information about emergency services  
2 districts;
- 3           (2) information and training related to the  
4 establishment of an emergency services district; and
- 5           (3) technical assistance related to the  
6 implementation of an emergency services district.

7           SECTION 19. Section 487.101, Government Code, is amended by  
8 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
9 read as follows:

10           (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
11 Department of State Health Services.

12           (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
13 Health Services.

14           (1-b) "Selection committee" means the Outstanding  
15 Rural Scholar Selection Committee.

16           SECTION 20. Sections 487.103(a), (b), and (c), Government  
17 Code, are amended to read as follows:

18           (a) The selection committee shall advise the commissioner  
19 ~~[board]~~ on the progress of the program.

20           (b) The selection committee is composed of 12 members  
21 appointed by the commissioner ~~[board]~~.

22           (c) The commissioner ~~[board]~~ shall consider geographical  
23 representation in making appointments to the selection committee.

24           SECTION 21. Sections 487.104(b) and (d), Government Code,  
25 are amended to read as follows:

26           (b) The selection committee shall make selections based on  
27 criteria approved by the commissioner ~~[board]~~ and adopted as a rule

1 of the department.

2 (d) The selection committee shall recommend to the  
3 commissioner [~~board~~] guidelines to be used by rural communities in  
4 the selection of students for nomination and sponsorship as  
5 outstanding rural scholars.

6 SECTION 22. Section 487.107, Government Code, is amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 Sec. 487.107. AWARDING OF LOANS. (a) The selection  
9 committee shall recommend to the commissioner [~~board~~] guidelines  
10 for the awarding of forgivable loans to outstanding rural scholars.

11 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~], acting on the advice of the  
12 selection committee, shall award forgivable loans to outstanding  
13 rural scholars based on the availability of money in the fund.

14 (c) If in any year the fund is inadequate to provide loans to  
15 all eligible applicants, the commissioner [~~board~~] shall award  
16 forgivable loans on a priority basis according to the applicants'  
17 academic performance, test scores, and other criteria of  
18 eligibility.

19 SECTION 23. Section 487.108(a), Government Code, is amended  
20 to read as follows:

21 (a) On confirmation of an outstanding rural scholar's  
22 admission to a postsecondary educational institution, or on receipt  
23 of an enrollment report of the scholar at a postsecondary  
24 educational institution, and a certification of the amount of  
25 financial support needed, the selection committee annually shall  
26 recommend to the commissioner [~~board~~] that the commissioner [~~board~~]  
27 award a forgivable loan to the scholar in the amount of 50 percent



1 of the cost of the scholar's tuition, fees, educational materials,  
2 and living expenses.

3 SECTION 24. Sections 487.109(b), (c), and (d), Government  
4 Code, are amended to read as follows:

5 (b) The sponsoring community shall report to the  
6 commissioner [~~board~~] the length of time the scholar practices as a  
7 health care professional in the community.

8 (c) If the commissioner [~~board~~] finds that a sponsoring  
9 community is not in need of the scholar's services and that the  
10 community is willing to forgive repayment of the principal balance  
11 and interest of the scholar's loan, the commissioner [~~board~~] by  
12 rule may provide for the principal balance and interest of one year  
13 of the scholar's loan to be forgiven for each year the scholar  
14 practices in another rural community in this state.

15 (d) Any amount of loan principal or interest that is not  
16 forgiven under this section shall be repaid to the department with  
17 reasonable collection fees in a timely manner as provided by  
18 commissioner [~~board~~] rule.

19 SECTION 25. Section 487.112, Government Code, is amended to  
20 read as follows:

21 Sec. 487.112. ADOPTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF RULES. (a) The  
22 commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt reasonable rules to enforce the  
23 requirements, conditions, and limitations under this subchapter.

24 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall set the rate of interest  
25 charged on a forgivable loan under this subchapter.

26 (c) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt rules necessary to  
27 ensure compliance with the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42

1 U.S.C. Section 2000a et seq.) concerning nondiscrimination in  
2 admissions.

3 SECTION 26. Section 487.151, Government Code, is amended by  
4 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
7 Department of State Health Services.

8 (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
9 Health Services.

10 (1-b) "Fund" means the health careers education fund.

11 SECTION 27. Section 487.154, Government Code, is amended to  
12 read as follows:

13 Sec. 487.154. LOANS. (a) The commissioner [~~board~~] may  
14 award forgivable educational loans to eligible students under this  
15 subchapter.

16 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] may award forgivable loans to  
17 eligible students based on the availability of money in the fund.

18 (c) If in any year the fund is inadequate to provide loans to  
19 all eligible students, the commissioner [~~board~~] may award  
20 forgivable loans on a priority basis according to the students'  
21 academic performance, test scores, and other criteria of  
22 eligibility.

23 SECTION 28. Section 487.155(a), Government Code, is amended  
24 to read as follows:

25 (a) To be eligible to receive a loan under this subchapter,  
26 a student must:

27 (1) be sponsored by an eligible community;

1           (2) at the time of the application for the loan, be  
2 enrolled in high school or enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a  
3 postsecondary educational institution in this state;

4           (3) meet academic requirements as established by the  
5 commissioner [~~board~~];

6           (4) plan to complete a health care professional degree  
7 or certificate program;

8           (5) plan to practice as a health care professional in a  
9 qualified area of the state; and

10           (6) meet other requirements as established by the  
11 commissioner [~~board~~].

12           SECTION 29. Section 487.156(c), Government Code, is amended  
13 to read as follows:

14           (c) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall determine the percentage  
15 of educational expenses communities are required to provide under  
16 this section.

17           SECTION 30. Section 487.157(a), Government Code, is amended  
18 to read as follows:

19           (a) On confirmation of an eligible student's admission to a  
20 postsecondary educational institution, or on receipt of an  
21 enrollment report of the student at a postsecondary educational  
22 institution, and certification of the amount of financial support  
23 needed, the commissioner [~~board~~] may award a forgivable loan to the  
24 student in the amount of not more than the cost of the student's  
25 tuition, fees, educational materials, and living expenses.

26           SECTION 31. Section 487.158(b), Government Code, is amended  
27 to read as follows:

1 (b) The contract must provide that if the student does not  
2 provide the required services to the community or provides those  
3 services for less than the required time, the student is personally  
4 liable to the state for:

5 (1) the total amount of assistance the student  
6 receives from the department and the sponsoring community;

7 (2) interest on the total amount at a rate set by the  
8 commissioner [~~board~~]; and

9 (3) the state's reasonable expenses incurred in  
10 obtaining payment, including reasonable attorney's fees.

11 SECTION 32. Section 487.159(b), Government Code, is amended  
12 to read as follows:

13 (b) If the commissioner [~~board~~] finds that a sponsoring  
14 community is not in need of the student's services and that the  
15 community is willing to forgive repayment of the principal balance  
16 and interest of the student's loan, the commissioner [~~board~~] by  
17 rule may provide for the principal balance and interest of the  
18 student's loan to be forgiven if the student provides services in  
19 another qualified area in this state.

20 SECTION 33. Sections 487.161(b) and (c), Government Code,  
21 are amended to read as follows:

22 (b) The sponsoring community shall report to the  
23 commissioner [~~board~~] the length of time the student provides health  
24 care services in the community in accordance with the guidelines  
25 established by the commissioner [~~board~~].

26 (c) A postsecondary educational institution shall provide  
27 to the commissioner [~~board~~] a copy of the academic transcript of

1 each student for whom the institution has received a release that  
2 complies with state and federal open records laws and that  
3 authorizes the provision of the transcript.

4 SECTION 34. Section 487.163, Government Code, is amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 Sec. 487.163. ADOPTION OF RULES. (a) The commissioner  
7 [~~board~~] shall adopt reasonable rules to enforce the requirements,  
8 conditions, and limitations of this subchapter.

9 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall set the rate of interest  
10 charged on a forgivable loan under this subchapter.

11 (c) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt rules necessary to  
12 ensure compliance with the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42  
13 U.S.C. Section 2000a et seq.) concerning nondiscrimination in  
14 admissions.

15 SECTION 35. Section 487.201, Government Code, is amended by  
16 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
17 read as follows:

18 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
19 Department of State Health Services.

20 (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
21 Health Services.

22 (1-b) "Medically underserved community" means:

23 (A) a community located in an area in this state  
24 with a medically underserved population;

25 (B) a community located in an area in this state  
26 designated by the United States secretary of health and human  
27 services as an area with a shortage of personal health services;

1 (C) a population group designated by the United  
2 States secretary of health and human services as having a shortage  
3 of personal health services;

4 (D) a community designated under state or federal  
5 law as a medically underserved community; or

6 (E) a community that the department considers to  
7 be medically underserved based on relevant demographic,  
8 geographic, and environmental factors.

9 SECTION 36. Sections 487.202(a), (d), and (e), Government  
10 Code, are amended to read as follows:

11 (a) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall establish and administer  
12 a program under this subchapter to increase the number of  
13 physicians providing primary care in medically underserved  
14 communities.

15 (d) The department may not pay more than \$25,000 to a  
16 community in a fiscal year unless the commissioner [~~board~~] makes a  
17 specific finding of need by the community.

18 (e) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall establish priorities so  
19 that the neediest communities eligible for assistance under this  
20 subchapter are assured the receipt of a grant.

21 SECTION 37. Section 487.203, Government Code, is amended to  
22 read as follows:

23 Sec. 487.203. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible to receive money  
24 from the department, a medically underserved community must:

- 25 (1) apply for the money; and  
26 (2) provide evidence satisfactory to the commissioner  
27 [~~board~~] that it has entered into an agreement with a physician for

1 the physician to provide primary care in the community for at least  
2 two years.

3 SECTION 38. Section 487.204, Government Code, is amended to  
4 read as follows:

5 Sec. 487.204. RULES. The commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt  
6 rules necessary for the administration of this subchapter,  
7 including rules addressing:

8 (1) eligibility criteria for a medically underserved  
9 community;

10 (2) eligibility criteria for a physician;

11 (3) minimum and maximum community contributions to the  
12 start-up money for a physician to be matched with state money;

13 (4) conditions under which state money must be repaid  
14 by a community or physician;

15 (5) procedures for disbursement of money by the  
16 department;

17 (6) the form and manner in which a community must make  
18 its contribution to the start-up money; and

19 (7) the contents of an agreement to be entered into by  
20 the parties, which must include at least:

21 (A) a credit check for an eligible physician; and

22 (B) community retention of interest in any  
23 property, equipment, or durable goods for seven years.

24 SECTION 39. Section 487.251, Government Code, is amended by  
25 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
26 read as follows:

27 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the

1 Department of State Health Services.

2 (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
3 Health Services.

4 (1-b) "Medically underserved area" means an area  
5 designated by the United States secretary of health and human  
6 services as having:

7 (A) a shortage of personal health services or a  
8 population group that has such a shortage as provided by 42 U.S.C.  
9 Section 300e-1(7); or

10 (B) a health professional shortage as provided by  
11 42 U.S.C. Section 254e(a)(1).

12 SECTION 40. Section 487.252, Government Code, is amended to  
13 read as follows:

14 Sec. 487.252. TEXAS HEALTH SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM. (a) The  
15 commissioner [~~board~~] shall establish a program in the department to  
16 assist communities in recruiting and retaining physicians to  
17 practice in medically underserved areas.

18 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] by rule shall establish:

- 19 (1) eligibility criteria for applicants;  
20 (2) stipend application procedures;  
21 (3) guidelines relating to stipend amounts;  
22 (4) procedures for evaluating stipend applications;

23 and

24 (5) a system of priorities relating to the:

25 (A) geographic areas covered;

26 (B) medical specialties eligible to receive  
27 funding under the program; and



1 (C) level of stipend support.

2 SECTION 41. Section 487.253(a), Government Code, is amended  
3 to read as follows:

4 (a) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt rules necessary to  
5 administer this subchapter, and the department shall administer the  
6 program in accordance with those rules.

7 SECTION 42. Section 487.301, Government Code, is amended by  
8 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivision (1-a) to read as  
9 follows:

10 (1) "Department" means the Department of State Health  
11 Services.

12 (1-a) "Public hospital" means a general or special  
13 hospital licensed under Chapter 241, Health and Safety Code, that  
14 is owned or operated by a municipality, county, municipality and  
15 county, hospital district, or hospital authority and that performs  
16 inpatient or outpatient services.

17 SECTION 43. Subchapter I, Chapter 487, Government Code, is  
18 amended by adding Section 487.3511 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 487.3511. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

20 (1) "Board" means the governing board of the Texas  
21 Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

22 (2) "Department" means the Texas Department of Housing  
23 and Community Affairs.

24 SECTION 44. Section 487.401, Government Code, is amended to  
25 read as follows:

26 Sec. 487.401. ADMINISTRATION. (a) In this section:

27 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the

1 Department of State Health Services.

2 (2) "Department" means the Department of State Health  
3 Services.

4 (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt rules that  
5 establish a procedure for designating a hospital as a rural  
6 hospital in order for the hospital to qualify for federal funds  
7 under 42 C.F.R. Part 412.

8 (c) [~~(b)~~] At the hospital's request, the department shall  
9 designate the hospital as a rural hospital if the hospital meets the  
10 requirements for a rural hospital under the commissioner's  
11 [~~board's~~] rules.

12 SECTION 45. Section 487.451, Government Code, is amended by  
13 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
14 read as follows:

15 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
16 Department of State Health Services.

17 (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
18 Health Services.

19 (1-b) "Health care professional" means:

- 20 (A) an advanced nurse practitioner;  
21 (B) a dentist;  
22 (C) a dental hygienist;  
23 (D) a laboratory technician;  
24 (E) a licensed vocational nurse;  
25 (F) a licensed professional counselor;  
26 (G) a medical radiological technologist;  
27 (H) an occupational therapist;

- 1 (I) a pharmacist;
- 2 (J) a physical therapist;
- 3 (K) a physician;
- 4 (L) a physician assistant;
- 5 (M) a psychologist;
- 6 (N) a registered nurse;
- 7 (O) a social worker;
- 8 (P) a speech-language pathologist;
- 9 (Q) a veterinarian;
- 10 (R) a chiropractor; and
- 11 (S) another appropriate health care professional
- 12 identified by the board.

13 SECTION 46. Section 487.452(a), Government Code, is amended  
14 to read as follows:

15 (a) The commissioner [~~board~~], in collaboration with Area  
16 Health Education Center Programs, shall establish a community  
17 health care [~~healthcare~~] awareness and mentoring program for  
18 students to:

19 (1) identify high school students in rural and  
20 underserved urban areas who are interested in serving those areas  
21 as health care professionals;

22 (2) identify health care professionals in rural and  
23 underserved urban areas to act as positive role models, mentors, or  
24 reference resources for the interested high school students;

25 (3) introduce interested high school students to the  
26 spectrum of professional health care careers through activities  
27 such as health care camps and shadowing of health care

1 professionals;

2 (4) encourage a continued interest in service as  
3 health care professionals in rural and underserved urban areas by  
4 providing mentors and community resources for students  
5 participating in training or educational programs to become health  
6 care professionals; and

7 (5) provide continuing community-based support for  
8 students during the period the students are attending training or  
9 educational programs to become health care professionals,  
10 including summer job opportunities and opportunities to mentor high  
11 school students in the community.

12 SECTION 47. Section 487.454, Government Code, is amended to  
13 read as follows:

14 Sec. 487.454. GRANTS; ELIGIBILITY. (a) Subject to  
15 available funds, the commissioner [~~board~~] shall develop and  
16 implement, as a component of the program, a grant program to support  
17 employment opportunities in rural and underserved urban areas in  
18 this state for students participating in training or educational  
19 programs to become health care professionals.

20 (b) In awarding grants under the program, the commissioner  
21 [~~board~~] shall give first priority to grants to training or  
22 educational programs that provide internships to students.

23 (c) To be eligible to receive a grant under the grant  
24 program, a person must:

25 (1) apply for the grant on a form adopted by the  
26 commissioner [~~board~~];

27 (2) be enrolled or intend to be enrolled in a training

1 or educational program to become a health care professional;

2 (3) commit to practice or work, after licensure as a  
3 health care professional, for at least one year as a health care  
4 professional in a rural or underserved urban area in this state; and

5 (4) comply fully with any practice or requirements  
6 associated with any scholarship, loan, or other similar benefit  
7 received by the student.

8 (d) As a condition of receiving a grant under the program  
9 the student must agree to repay the amount of the grant, plus a  
10 penalty in an amount established by rule of the commissioner  
11 [~~board~~] not to exceed two times the amount of the grant, if the  
12 student becomes licensed as a health care professional and fails to  
13 practice or work for at least one year as a health care professional  
14 in a rural or underserved urban area in this state.

15 SECTION 48. Section 487.501, Government Code, is amended by  
16 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivision (1-a) to read as  
17 follows:

18 (1) "Department" means the Department of State Health  
19 Services.

20 (1-a) "Rural community" means a rural area as defined  
21 by the department.

22 SECTION 49. Section 487.551, Government Code, is amended by  
23 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
24 read as follows:

25 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
26 Department of State Health Services.

27 (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State

1 Health Services.

2           (1-b) "Health professional" means a person other than  
3 a physician who holds a license, certificate, registration, permit,  
4 or other form of authorization required by law or a state agency  
5 rule that must be obtained by an individual to practice in a health  
6 care profession.

7           SECTION 50. Section 487.553, Government Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9           Sec. 487.553. LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM. The commissioner  
10 [~~board~~] shall establish a program in the department to assist  
11 communities in recruiting health professionals to practice in  
12 medically underserved communities by providing loan reimbursement  
13 for health professionals who serve in those communities.

14           SECTION 51. Section 487.554(a), Government Code, is amended  
15 to read as follows:

16           (a) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall establish a program in  
17 the department to assist communities in recruiting health  
18 professionals to practice in medically underserved communities by  
19 providing a stipend to health professionals who agree to serve in  
20 those communities.

21           SECTION 52. Section 487.555(e), Government Code, is amended  
22 to read as follows:

23           (e) A contract under this section must provide that a health  
24 professional who does not provide the required services to the  
25 community or provides those services for less than the required  
26 time is personally liable to the state for:

27           (1) the total amount of assistance the health

1 professional received from the department and the medically  
2 underserved community;

3 (2) interest on the amount under Subdivision (1) at a  
4 rate set by the commissioner [~~board~~];

5 (3) the state's reasonable expenses incurred in  
6 obtaining payment, including reasonable attorney's fees; and

7 (4) a penalty as established by the commissioner  
8 [~~board~~] by rule to help ensure compliance with the contract.

9 SECTION 53. Section 487.556, Government Code, is amended to  
10 read as follows:

11 Sec. 487.556. POWERS AND DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT. (a) The  
12 commissioner [~~board~~] shall adopt rules necessary for the  
13 administration of this subchapter, including guidelines for:

14 (1) developing contracts under which loan  
15 reimbursement or stipend recipients provide services to qualifying  
16 communities;

17 (2) identifying the duties of the state, state agency,  
18 loan reimbursement or stipend recipient, and medically underserved  
19 community under the loan reimbursement or stipend contract;

20 (3) determining a rate of interest to be charged under  
21 Section 487.555(e)(2);

22 (4) ensuring that a loan reimbursement or stipend  
23 recipient provides access to health services to participants in  
24 government-funded health benefits programs in qualifying  
25 communities;

26 (5) encouraging the use of telecommunications or  
27 telemedicine, as appropriate;

1           (6) prioritizing the provision of loan reimbursements  
2 and stipends to health professionals who are not eligible for any  
3 other state loan forgiveness, loan repayment, or stipend program;

4           (7) prioritizing the provision of loan reimbursements  
5 and stipends to health professionals who are graduates of health  
6 professional degree programs in this state;

7           (8) encouraging a medically underserved community  
8 served by a loan reimbursement or stipend recipient to contribute  
9 to the cost of the loan reimbursement or stipend when making a  
10 contribution is feasible; and

11           (9) requiring a medically underserved community  
12 served by a loan reimbursement or stipend recipient to assist the  
13 department in contracting with the loan reimbursement or stipend  
14 recipient who will serve that community.

15           (b) The commissioner [~~board~~] by rule may designate areas of  
16 the state as medically underserved communities.

17           (c) The commissioner [~~board~~] shall make reasonable efforts  
18 to contract with health professionals from a variety of different  
19 health professions.

20           SECTION 54. Section 487.601, Government Code, is amended by  
21 amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivisions (1-a) and (1-b) to  
22 read as follows:

23           (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the  
24 Department of State Health Services.

25           (1-a) "Department" means the Department of State  
26 Health Services.

27           (1-b) "Physician" means a person licensed to practice



1 medicine in this state under Subtitle B, Title 3, Occupations Code.

2 SECTION 55. Section 487.608(a), Government Code, is amended  
3 to read as follows:

4 (a) The rural physician relief advisory committee is  
5 composed of the following members appointed by the commissioner  
6 [~~board~~]:

7 (1) a physician who practices in the area of general  
8 family medicine in a rural county;

9 (2) a physician who practices in the area of general  
10 internal medicine in a rural county;

11 (3) a physician who practices in the area of general  
12 pediatrics in a rural county;

13 (4) a representative from an accredited Texas medical  
14 school;

15 (5) a program director from an accredited primary care  
16 residency program;

17 (6) a representative from the Texas Higher Education  
18 Coordinating Board; and

19 (7) a representative from the Texas Medical Board.

20 SECTION 56. Section 487.651, Government Code, is amended by  
21 adding Subdivision (1-a) to read as follows:

22 (1-a) "Department" means the Texas Department of  
23 Housing and Community Affairs.

24 SECTION 57. Subchapter P, Chapter 487, Government Code, is  
25 amended by adding Section 487.7011 to read as follows:

26 Sec. 487.7011. DEFINITION. In this subchapter,  
27 "department" means the Texas Department of Housing and Community

1 Affairs.

2 SECTION 58. Section 487.751, Government Code, is amended to  
3 read as follows:

4 Sec. 487.751. DEFINITIONS [~~DEFINITION~~]. In this  
5 subchapter:

6 (1) "Department" means the Texas Department of Housing  
7 and Community Affairs.

8 (2) "Rural [~~rural~~ county" means a county that has a  
9 population of not more than 125,000.

10 SECTION 59. Section 490A.003(a), Government Code, is  
11 amended to read as follows:

12 (a) The founding members of the network are:

13 (1) the Texas AgriLife [~~Cooperative~~] Extension  
14 Service of The Texas A&M University System;

15 (2) the IC2 Institute at The University of Texas at  
16 Austin;

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

19 (4) the Department of Agriculture;

20 (5) the Texas Workforce Commission;

21 (6) the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
22 [~~Rural~~] Affairs;

23 (7) the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship;

24 (8) the Texas Economic Development Council;

25 (9) CoSERVE at The University of Texas--Pan American;

26 (10) the office of external affairs at Texas Southern  
27 University; and

1           (11) the John F. Baugh Center for Entrepreneurship at  
2 Baylor University.

3           SECTION 60. Section 531.02172(b), Government Code, is  
4 amended to read as follows:

5           (b) The advisory committee must include:

6           (1) representatives of health and human services  
7 agencies and other state agencies concerned with the use of  
8 telemedical consultations in the Medicaid program and the state  
9 child health plan program, including representatives of:

10                   (A) the commission;

11                   (B) the Department of State Health Services;

12                   (C) [~~the Texas Department of Rural Affairs,~~

13                   [~~(D)~~] the Texas Department of Insurance;

14                   (D) [~~(E)~~] the Texas Medical Board;

15                   (E) [~~(F)~~] the Texas Board of Nursing; and

16                   (F) [~~(G)~~] the Texas State Board of Pharmacy;

17           (2) representatives of health science centers in this  
18 state;

19           (3) experts on telemedicine, telemedical  
20 consultation, and telemedicine medical services or telehealth  
21 services; and

22           (4) representatives of consumers of health services  
23 provided through telemedical consultations and telemedicine  
24 medical services or telehealth services.

25           SECTION 61. Section 535.051(b), Government Code, is amended  
26 to read as follows:

27           (b) The chief administrative officer of each of the

1 following state agencies, in consultation with the governor, shall  
2 designate one employee from the agency to serve as a liaison for  
3 faith- and community-based organizations:

- 4 (1) [~~the Office of Rural Community Affairs;~~
- 5 [~~2~~] the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
- 6 (2) [~~3~~] the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;
- 7 (3) [~~4~~] the Texas Department of Housing and  
8 Community Affairs;
- 9 (4) [~~5~~] the Texas Education Agency;
- 10 (5) [~~6~~] the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission;
- 11 (6) [~~7~~] the Texas Veterans Commission;
- 12 (7) [~~8~~] the Texas Workforce Commission;
- 13 (8) [~~9~~] the Texas Youth Commission; and
- 14 (9) [~~10~~] other state agencies as determined by the  
15 governor.

16 SECTION 62. Section 614.152(3), Government Code, is amended  
17 to read as follows:

- 18 (3) "State fire agency" means the:
  - 19 (A) firefighters' pension commissioner;
  - 20 (B) [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services  
21 [~~Rural Affairs~~];
  - 22 (C) service;
  - 23 (D) Texas Commission on Fire Protection;
  - 24 (E) Texas Engineering Extension Service of The  
25 Texas A&M University System; and
  - 26 (F) Texas State Fire Marshal's Office of the  
27 Texas Department of Insurance.

1           SECTION 63. Section 772.011(b), Government Code, is amended  
2 to read as follows:

3           (b) The work group is composed of the heads of the following  
4 agencies or their designees:

5           (1) the [~~Texas~~] Department of Agriculture [~~Rural~~  
6 ~~Affairs~~];

7           (2) the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
8 Affairs;

9           (3) the Texas Water Development Board;

10           (4) the Texas Department of Transportation;

11           (5) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;

12           (6) the Texas Workforce Commission;

13           (7) the Department of State Health Services;

14           (8) the Health and Human Services Commission;

15           (9) the General Land Office;

16           (10) the Texas Education Agency;

17           (11) the Texas Economic Development and Tourism  
18 Office;

19           (12) the Office of State-Federal Relations;

20           (13) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;

21           (14) the attorney general's office;

22           (15) the secretary of state's office;

23           (16) the Department of Public Safety; and

24           (17) the Railroad Commission of Texas.

25           SECTION 64. Section 775.002(d), Government Code, is amended  
26 to read as follows:

27           (d) The following agencies shall designate an officer or

1 employee of the agency to serve as the agency's liaison for colonia  
2 initiatives:

- 3 (1) the office of the attorney general;
- 4 (2) the Department of State Health Services;
- 5 (3) the Texas Department of Housing and Community  
6 Affairs;
- 7 (4) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
- 8 (5) the Texas Water Development Board;
- 9 (6) ~~[the Texas Department of Rural Affairs;~~
- 10 ~~[(7)]~~ the Office of State-Federal Relations;
- 11 (7) ~~[(8)]~~ the Texas Department of Insurance; and
- 12 (8) ~~[(9)]~~ the Texas Department of Transportation.

13 SECTION 65. Section 2306.034(b), Government Code, is  
14 amended to read as follows:

15 (b) A person may not be a member of the board and may not be a  
16 department employee employed in a "bona fide executive,  
17 administrative, or professional capacity," as that phrase is used  
18 for purposes of establishing an exemption to the overtime  
19 provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29  
20 U.S.C. Section 201 et seq.) if:

21 (1) the person is an officer, employee, or paid  
22 consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of rural  
23 affairs, banking, real estate, housing development, or housing  
24 construction; or

25 (2) the person's spouse is an officer, manager, or paid  
26 consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of rural  
27 affairs, banking, real estate, housing development, or housing

1 construction.

2 SECTION 66. Section 2306.1092(b), Government Code, is  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 (b) The council is composed of 15 [~~16~~] members consisting  
5 of:

6 (1) the director;

7 (2) one representative from each of the following  
8 agencies, appointed by the head of that agency:

9 (A) [~~the Office of Rural Community Affairs,~~  
10 [~~B~~] the Texas State Affordable Housing  
11 Corporation;

12 (B) [~~C~~] the Health and Human Services  
13 Commission;

14 (C) [~~D~~] the Department of Assistive and  
15 Rehabilitative Services;

16 (D) [~~E~~] the Department of Aging and Disability  
17 Services; and

18 (E) [~~F~~] the Department of State Health  
19 Services;

20 (3) one representative from the Department of  
21 Agriculture who is:

22 (A) knowledgeable about the Texans Feeding  
23 Texans and Retire in Texas programs or similar programs; and

24 (B) appointed by the head of that agency;

25 (4) one member who is:

26 (A) a member of the Health and Human Services  
27 Commission Promoting Independence Advisory Committee; and

- 1 (B) appointed by the governor; and  
2 (5) one representative from each of the following  
3 interest groups, appointed by the governor:  
4 (A) financial institutions;  
5 (B) multifamily housing developers;  
6 (C) health services entities;  
7 (D) nonprofit organizations that advocate for  
8 affordable housing and consumer-directed long-term services and  
9 support;  
10 (E) consumers of service-enriched housing;  
11 (F) advocates for minority issues; and  
12 (G) rural communities.

13 SECTION 67. Section 86.011, Health and Safety Code, is  
14 amended to read as follows:

15 Sec. 86.011. BREAST CANCER SCREENING. (a) In this section,  
16 "department" means the Department of State Health Services.

17 (b) The department [~~Texas Department of Rural Affairs~~] may  
18 provide for breast cancer screening in counties with a population  
19 of 50,000 or less.

20 (c) [~~(b)~~] The department [~~Texas Department of Rural~~  
21 ~~Affairs~~] may provide the breast cancer screening through contracts  
22 with public or private entities to provide mobile units and on-site  
23 screening services.

24 [~~(c) The Texas Department of Rural Affairs shall coordinate~~  
25 ~~the breast cancer screening with programs administered by the Texas~~  
26 ~~Cancer Council.~~]

27 SECTION 68. Sections 775.083(a), (b), and (c), Health and



1 Safety Code, are amended to read as follows:

2 (a) On or before January 1 of each year, a district shall  
3 file with the [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
4 ~~Affairs~~] an annual report that includes the following:

5 (1) the district's name;

6 (2) the name of each county in which the district is  
7 located;

8 (3) the district's business address;

9 (4) the name, mailing address, and term of office of  
10 each commissioner;

11 (5) the name, mailing address, and term of office of  
12 the district's general manager, executive director, and fire chief;

13 (6) the name of each legal counsel or other consultant  
14 for the district; and

15 (7) the district's annual budget and tax rate for the  
16 preceding fiscal year.

17 (b) The [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
18 ~~Affairs~~] may not charge a fee for filing the report.

19 (c) The [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
20 ~~Affairs~~] shall develop and maintain an Internet-based system that  
21 enables:

22 (1) a district to securely file the report and update  
23 the district's information; and

24 (2) the public to view, in a searchable format, the  
25 reports filed by districts under this section.

26 SECTION 69. Sections 776.083(a), (b), and (c), Health and  
27 Safety Code, are amended to read as follows:

1 (a) On or before January 1 of each year, a district shall  
2 file with the [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
3 ~~Affairs~~] an annual report that includes the following:

4 (1) the district's name;

5 (2) the name of each county in which the district is  
6 located;

7 (3) the district's business address;

8 (4) the name, mailing address, and term of office of  
9 each commissioner;

10 (5) the name, mailing address, and term of office of  
11 the district's general manager, executive director, and fire chief;

12 (6) the name of each legal counsel or other consultant  
13 for the district; and

14 (7) the district's annual budget and tax rate for the  
15 preceding fiscal year.

16 (b) The [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
17 ~~Affairs~~] may not charge a fee for filing the report.

18 (c) The [~~Texas~~] Department of State Health Services [~~Rural~~  
19 ~~Affairs~~] shall develop and maintain an Internet-based system that  
20 enables:

21 (1) a district to securely file the report and update  
22 the district's information; and

23 (2) the public to view, in a searchable format, the  
24 reports filed by districts under this section.

25 SECTION 70. Section 204.104, Occupations Code, is amended  
26 to read as follows:

27 Sec. 204.104. RURAL PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT

1 PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "department" means the Department of  
2 State Health Services.

3 (b) A program shall be established to provide student loan  
4 reimbursement for graduates of physician assistant training  
5 programs from any state who practice in rural health professional  
6 shortage areas and medically underserved areas identified by the  
7 department [~~Texas Department of Health~~]. The physician assistant  
8 board shall fund the program by designating annually a portion of  
9 the revenue generated under this chapter from physician assistant  
10 licensing fees.

11 (c) [~~(b)~~] The department [~~Texas Department of Rural~~  
12 ~~Affairs~~] shall establish policies for and adopt rules to administer  
13 the loan program.

14 (d) [~~(c)~~] The physician assistant board shall authorize and  
15 the medical board shall transfer annually the funds designated  
16 under Subsection (b) [~~(a)~~] to the department [~~Texas Department of~~  
17 ~~Rural Affairs~~] to administer the loan program.

18 SECTION 71. The following provisions are repealed:

- 19 (1) Section 12.040(f), Agriculture Code;
- 20 (2) Subchapter A, Chapter 487, Government Code;
- 21 (3) Subchapter B, Chapter 487, Government Code;
- 22 (4) Section 487.052, Government Code;
- 23 (5) Section 487.055, Government Code; and
- 24 (6) Section 487.058, Government Code.

25 SECTION 72. (a) On September 1, 2011, or as soon as  
26 practicable after that date, the Texas Department of Rural Affairs,  
27 Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Department of

1 State Health Services, and Department of Agriculture shall enter  
2 into a memorandum of understanding that provides a comprehensive  
3 plan to ensure the orderly transition of all programs operated by  
4 the Texas Department of Rural Affairs to those agencies. The  
5 memorandum of understanding must provide for:

6 (1) the transfer of the community development block  
7 grant nonentitlement program to the Texas Department of Housing and  
8 Community Affairs;

9 (2) the transfer of the rural health programs to the  
10 Department of State Health Services; and

11 (3) the transfer of the renewable energy demonstration  
12 pilot program and the desalination program to the Department of  
13 Agriculture.

14 (b) This section takes effect September 1, 2011.

15 SECTION 73. (a) On the effective date of this Act, the  
16 Texas Department of Rural Affairs is abolished and all powers,  
17 duties, obligations, rights, contracts, bonds, appropriations,  
18 records, property, and personnel of those agencies are transferred  
19 to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs,  
20 Department of State Health Services, and Department of Agriculture  
21 as provided for in the memorandum of understanding described by  
22 Section 72 of this Act.

23 (b) A rule, policy, procedure, or decision of the Texas  
24 Department of Rural Affairs continues in effect as a rule, policy,  
25 procedure, or decision of the Texas Department of Housing and  
26 Community Affairs, Department of State Health Services, or  
27 Department of Agriculture, as appropriate, until superseded by an

1 act of that agency.

2 SECTION 74. Except as otherwise provided by this Act, this

3 Act takes effect September 1, 2012.