

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 51

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a pilot program to expand access to career and technical education partnerships in rural areas.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, is amended by adding Section 12.0272 to read as follows:

Sec. 12.0272. RURAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) In this section:

(1) "General academic teaching institution," "public junior college," and "public technical institute" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003, Education Code.

(2) "Rural area" means:

(A) a county with a population of less than 100,000; or

(B) a municipality with a population of less than 50,000.

(b) Subject to available funding, the commissioner by rule shall develop a rural workforce investment pilot program to issue grants for developing partnerships in rural areas among school districts, public junior colleges, public technical institutes, general academic teaching institutions, and business and industry to provide greater access to career and technical education and industry certification to high school students in those areas.

(c) The department may not issue more than four grants under

1 this section in each state fiscal biennium.

2 (d) The department shall coordinate with the Texas
3 Workforce Commission, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating
4 Board, and the Texas Education Agency in developing the pilot
5 program.

6 (e) Students participating in the pilot program may receive
7 not more than 60 hours of college credit before high school
8 graduation.

9 (f) A local workforce development board authorized by the
10 Texas Workforce Commission may apply to participate in the pilot
11 program if the workforce development board:

- 12 (1) serves a rural area of the state; and
13 (2) meets any other qualifications prescribed by the
14 commissioner.

15 (g) To receive a grant under this section, an applicant must
16 commit public or private funds matching the grant in a percentage
17 set by the commissioner. The commissioner shall set the required
18 percentage of matching funds based on the demonstrated economic
19 capacity of the community served by the program to raise funds for
20 the purpose of matching the grant, as determined by the
21 commissioner.

22 SECTION 2. 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, 2011.