

By: Hinojosa
(Alonzo)

S.B. No. 145

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to student loan repayment assistance for nurses employed as faculty members at certain institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter GG to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER GG. NURSING FACULTY LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Sec. 61.9781. REPAYMENT AUTHORIZED. The board shall establish and administer a program to provide, in accordance with this subchapter and board rules, assistance in the repayment of student loans for nurses who:

(1) are serving on the faculties of nursing degree programs at institutions of higher education or private or independent institutions of higher education in positions that require an advanced degree in professional nursing; and

(2) apply and qualify for the assistance.

Sec. 61.9782. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible to receive loan repayment assistance under this subchapter, a nurse must:

(1) apply to the board;

(2) at the time of application for repayment assistance have been employed full-time for at least one year as, and be currently employed full-time as, a faculty member of a nursing degree program at an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education; and

1 (3) comply with any additional requirements adopted by
2 board rule.

3 Sec. 61.9783. LIMITATIONS. (a) On qualifying for loan
4 repayment assistance under this subchapter, a nurse may receive
5 repayment assistance for each year of full-time employment as a
6 faculty member of a nursing degree program at an institution of
7 higher education or private or independent institution of higher
8 education, not to exceed five years.

9 (b) The amount of loan repayment assistance received by a
10 nurse under this subchapter may not exceed \$5,000 in any one year.

11 (c) The total amount of loan repayment assistance provided
12 under this subchapter may not exceed the total amount of gifts and
13 grants accepted by the board for the repayment assistance,
14 legislative appropriations for the repayment assistance, and other
15 funds available to the board for the repayment assistance,
16 including any money reallocated under Section 61.9786.

17 Sec. 61.9784. ELIGIBLE LOANS. (a) The board may provide
18 repayment assistance for the repayment of any student loan for
19 education at any public or private institution of higher education,
20 including a loan for undergraduate education, received by an
21 eligible person through any lender.

22 (b) The board may not provide repayment assistance for a
23 student loan that is in default at the time of the nurse's
24 application.

25 Sec. 61.9785. REPAYMENT. (a) The board shall deliver any
26 repayment under this subchapter in a lump sum:

27 (1) payable to both the lender or other holder of the

1 loan and the nurse; or

2 (2) directly to the lender or other holder of the loan
3 on the nurse's behalf.

4 (b) A repayment under this subchapter may be applied to any
5 amount due in connection with the loan.

6 Sec. 61.9786. REALLOCATION OF MONEY. (a) In each state
7 fiscal year, the board shall reallocate for loan repayment
8 assistance under this subchapter for a particular year any money in
9 the physician education loan repayment program account established
10 under Section 61.5391 that exceeds the amount necessary in that
11 fiscal year for purposes of repayment assistance under Subchapter
12 J.

13 (b) Each year money reallocated under this section may be
14 used to fund loan repayment assistance for not more than 50 eligible
15 applicants.

16 (c) Any money reallocated under Subsection (a) in a fiscal
17 year that is not used for loan repayment assistance under this
18 subchapter in that fiscal year is treated as if that unused amount
19 had not been reallocated in that fiscal year.

20 Sec. 61.9787. SOLICITATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS. The
21 board may solicit and accept gifts and grants from any source for
22 the purposes of this subchapter.

23 Sec. 61.9788. RULES. (a) The board shall adopt rules as
24 necessary to administer this subchapter.

25 (b) The board shall distribute a copy of the rules adopted
26 under this section and pertinent information regarding this
27 subchapter to:

1 (1) each institution of higher education and private
2 or independent institution of higher education;

3 (2) any appropriate state agency; and

4 (3) any appropriate professional association.

5 SECTION 2. Subsection (b), Section 61.5391, Education Code,
6 is amended to read as follows:

7 (b) Money in the account may not be appropriated for any
8 purpose except:

9 (1) to provide loan repayment assistance to eligible
10 physicians under this subchapter; or

11 (2) to provide loan repayment assistance under
12 Subchapter GG if reallocated under Section 61.9786.

13 SECTION 3. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
14 shall adopt the rules for loan repayment assistance under
15 Subchapter GG, Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, not
16 later than December 1, 2011.

17 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
18 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
19 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
20 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
21 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.