

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 533
By: Lozano
Economic & Small Business Development
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to certain estimates, approximately 80 percent of all new jobs will require some form of postsecondary education. Interested parties note that while economic activity in the Eagle Ford Shale area has created an increase in the need for a skilled workforce, currently there is a shortage of workers in the area with the skills to meet this need. C.S.H.B. 533 seeks to address this skilled worker shortage by developing a rural workforce investment program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of agriculture in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 533 amends the Agriculture Code to authorize the commissioner of agriculture, subject to available funding, to develop a rural workforce investment program to facilitate partnerships in rural areas among school districts, public junior colleges, public technical institutes, general academic teaching institutions, and business and industry to promote workforce investment plans. The bill defines "rural area" as a county with a population of less than 200,000 or a municipality with a population of less than 50,000. The bill authorizes the commissioner to adopt rules to administer the rural workforce investment program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 533 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

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

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

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

Sec. 12.0272. RURAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

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

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 this section in each state fiscal biennium.

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

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

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

(1) serves a rural area of the state; and

(2) meets any other qualifications prescribed by the commissioner.

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

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article

Section 61.003, Education Code.

(2) "Rural area" means:

(A) a county with a population of less than 200,000; or

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

(b) Subject to available funding, the commissioner may develop a rural workforce investment program to facilitate partnerships in rural areas among school districts, public junior colleges, public technical institutes, general academic teaching institutions, and business and industry to promote workforce investment plans.

(c) The commissioner may adopt rules to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.