

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2478  
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Higher Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties suggest that Texas is in need of more psychiatrists and that the shortage is at risk of growing due to the limited number of available graduate medical residency slots in psychiatric specialty fields. H.B. 2478 seeks to address this issue by creating an innovation grant program to support residency training programs in psychiatric specialty fields.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2478 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish an innovation grant program, subject to available funds and not later than September 1, 2018, under which the coordinating board awards incentive payments to medical schools that administer innovative residency training programs designed to increase the number of physicians in Texas who specialize in pediatric or adult psychiatric care. The bill requires the coordinating board to first seek and apply for any available federal funds and authorizes the coordinating board, after determining in a program year the state's eligibility for federal funds, to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any other source, public or private, as necessary to ensure effective implementation of the program, with both actions specifically in addition to other money appropriated by the legislature and for the purpose of promoting pediatric or adult psychiatric care under the program.

H.B. 2478 requires the coordinating board, in consultation with each medical school in Texas, to adopt rules for the implementation and administration of the program, which must include administrative provisions relating to the awarding of grants and methods for tracking the effectiveness of grants that, using data reasonably available to the coordinating board, consider relevant information regarding the career paths of medical school graduates during the four-year period following their graduation, and that evaluate whether and for how long those graduates practice in a psychiatric specialty field in Texas.

H.B. 2478 requires the coordinating board, in awarding grants under the program, to award 60 percent of the amount available in each program year to medical schools with innovative residency programs that train physicians to specialize in pediatric psychiatric care and 40 percent of the amount available in each program year to medical schools with innovative residency programs that train physicians to specialize in adult psychiatric care. The bill requires the

coordinating board, within each category of grants, to give priority to grants to medical schools with innovative residency programs based in rural or underserved areas. The bill authorizes a reasonable amount, not to exceed three percent, of any money appropriated for purposes of the program to be used by the coordinating board to pay the costs of administering the program.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2017.