

By: Swanson

H.B. No. 3555

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to an innovation grant program for community faith-based programs that collaborate with the Department of Family and Protective Services to improve foster care.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.2042 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.2042. GRANTS FOR FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS. (a) Subject to the availability of funds, the department shall establish and administer an innovation grant program, administered by the governor, to award grants to support faith-based community programs that collaborate with the department and the commission to improve foster care and the placement of children in foster care.

(b) A faith-based community program is eligible for a grant under this section if:

(1) the effectiveness of the program is supported by empirical evidence; and

(2) the program has demonstrated the ability to build connections between faith-based, secular, and government stakeholders.

(c) The regional director for the department in the region where a grant recipient program is located, or the regional director's designee, shall serve as the liaison between the

1 department and the program for collaborative purposes. For a
2 program that operates in a larger region, the department may
3 designate a liaison in each county where the program is operating.
4 The department or the commission may not direct or manage the
5 operation of the program.

6 (d) The initial duration of a grant under this section is
7 two years. The department may renew a grant awarded to a program
8 under this section if the department determines that the program is
9 successful.

10 (e) The department may not award to a program grants under
11 this section totaling more than \$300,000.

12 (f) The department and the governor shall adopt rules to
13 implement the grant program created under this section.

14 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
15 of this Act, the governor and the Department of Family and
16 Protective Services shall adopt rules for the implementation and
17 administration of the innovation grant program established under
18 Section 264.2042, Family Code, as added by this Act, and begin to
19 award grants under the program.

20 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.