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H.B. No. 2155

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to a grant program to reduce wait times for agricultural
3 inspections of vehicles at ports of entry along the Texas-Mexico
4 border.

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

6 SECTION 1. Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, is amended by
7 adding Section 12.050 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 12.050. TRADE AGRICULTURAL INSPECTION GRANT PROGRAM.

9 (a) Using money appropriated for this purpose or money received
10 under Subsection (g), the department may make a grant to a nonprofit
11 organization for the purpose of promoting the agricultural
12 processing industry in this state by reducing wait times for
13 agricultural inspections of vehicles at ports of entry along the
14 border with the United Mexican States.

15 (b) The department shall request proposals for the award of
16 a grant under this section. The department shall evaluate the
17 proposals and award a grant based on the proposed program's
18 quantifiable effectiveness and the potentially positive impact on
19 the agricultural processing industry in this state.

20 (c) A grant awarded under this section must be made to an
21 organization that has demonstrated experience working with border
22 inspection authorities to reduce border crossing wait times.

23 (d) A grant recipient may use grant money received under
24 this section only to pay for activities directly related to the

1 purpose of the grant program as described by Subsection (a). A
2 grant recipient may use grant money to reimburse a federal
3 governmental agency that, at the request of the grant recipient,
4 provides additional border agricultural inspectors or pays
5 overtime to border agricultural inspectors at ports of entry along
6 the border with the United Mexican States.

7 (e) The department shall establish procedures to administer
8 the grant program, including a procedure for the submission of a
9 proposal and a procedure to be used by the department to evaluate a
10 proposal.

11 (f) The department shall enter into a contract that includes
12 performance requirements with each grant recipient. The department
13 shall monitor and enforce the terms of the contract. The contract
14 must authorize the department to recoup grant money from a grant
15 recipient for failure of the grant recipient to comply with the
16 terms of the contract.

17 (g) The department may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and
18 donations from any source for the purpose of awarding grants under
19 this section.

20 (h) To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a
21 nonprofit organization must provide matching funds. The department
22 may not award a grant to a nonprofit organization until the
23 department certifies that the nonprofit organization has the
24 matching funds. The amount of the grant may not exceed the amount
25 of matching funds. The department may not require a nonprofit
26 organization to provide matching funds in an amount that exceeds
27 the amount of the grant.

1 (i) The total amount of grants awarded under this section
2 may not exceed \$725,000 for the duration of the program.

3 (j) The department may adopt any rules necessary to
4 implement this section.

5 (k) Not later than January 15, 2021, the department shall
6 evaluate the performance of the program under this section and
7 submit a report to the legislature. The report must include an
8 evaluation of agricultural inspections affected by the program,
9 including the extent to which the program is reducing wait times for
10 agricultural inspections of vehicles at ports of entry along the
11 border with the United Mexican States.

12 (l) Unless continued in existence by the legislature, this
13 section expires September 1, 2021.

14 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.