

By: Thompson of Harris

H.J.R. No. 5

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of
2 general obligation bonds by the Texas Public Finance Authority to
3 fund research, treatment, and access to services in this state for
4 behavioral health, mental health, and substance use and addiction
5 issues.

6 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

7 SECTION 1. Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended by
8 adding Section 68 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 68. (a) The legislature by general law may authorize
10 the Texas Public Finance Authority or its successor to provide for,
11 issue, and sell general obligation bonds of the State of Texas and
12 to enter into related credit agreements for the purpose of funding
13 programs:

14 (1) to research behavioral health issues generally,
15 including causes of behavioral health issues, public health trends
16 and strategies regarding behavioral health issues, and new
17 behavioral health treatments, interventions, and other solutions;

18 (2) to research substance use and addiction issues,
19 including genetic determinates of addiction, identification of and
20 mitigation of substance use and addiction risk factors, addiction
21 recovery, pain management strategies, and prescription practices;

22 (3) to research behavioral health and mental health
23 issues affecting children and adolescents, including unidentified
24 and untreated mental illness, involvement in the juvenile justice

1 system, and suicide prevention; and
2 (4) to address the shortage of mental health
3 professionals in this state, including programs to increase access
4 to mental health professionals in rural areas of the state,
5 programs to increase the use of telemedicine in the treatment of
6 behavioral health or mental health issues, and programs to provide
7 loan repayment assistance and other funding for mental health
8 professionals, including physicians and advanced practice nurses
9 trained in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of mental
10 illness in children and adolescents.

11 (b) Proceeds from the sale of the bonds shall be deposited
12 in separate funds or accounts, as provided by general law, in the
13 state treasury to be used by the Health and Human Services
14 Commission or its successor to provide grants to public or private
15 institutions of higher education in this state or other state
16 agencies or government entities for the purposes provided by
17 Subsection (a) of this section.

18 (c) The bond proceeds may be used to pay the costs of issuing
19 the bonds and any administrative expense related to the bonds.

20 (d) While any of the bonds or interest on the bonds
21 authorized by this section is outstanding and unpaid, from the
22 first money coming into the state treasury in each fiscal year not
23 otherwise appropriated by this constitution, an amount sufficient
24 to pay the principal of and interest on bonds that mature or become
25 due during the fiscal year and to make payments that become due
26 under a related credit agreement during the fiscal year is
27 appropriated, less the amount in the sinking fund at the close of

1 the previous fiscal year.

2 (e) Bonds issued under this section, after approval by the
3 attorney general, registration by the comptroller of public
4 accounts, and delivery to the purchasers, are incontestable and are
5 general obligations of the State of Texas under this constitution.

6 SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be
7 submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 5, 2019.
8 The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or against the
9 proposition: "The constitutional amendment providing for the
10 issuance of general obligation bonds by the Texas Public Finance
11 Authority to fund research, treatment, and access to services in
12 this state for behavioral health, mental health, and substance use
13 and addiction issues."