By:  Zaffirini S.B. No. 1744

(In the Senate - Filed March 12, 2021; March 26, 2021, read first time and referred to Committee on Local Government; April 27, 2021, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; April 27, 2021, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

                 Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Bettencourt       X

Menéndez                    X

Eckhardt          X

Gutierrez         X

Hall              X

Nichols           X

Paxton            X

Springer          X

Zaffirini         X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the services provided by a colonia self-help center.

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

SECTION 1.  Sections 2306.586(a), (b), (c), and (d), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a)  The purpose of a self-help center is to assist individuals and families of low income and very low income to finance, refinance, construct, improve, or maintain a safe, suitable home and otherwise improve living conditions in the colonias' designated service area or in another area the department has determined is suitable.

(b)  A self-help center shall set a goal to improve the living conditions of residents in the colonias designated under Section 2306.583(b) [~~2306.583(a)(2)~~] within a two-year period after a contract is awarded under this subchapter.

(c)  A self-help center may serve individuals and families of low income and very low income by:

(1)  providing assistance in obtaining loans or grants to build a home;

(2)  teaching construction skills necessary to repair or build a home;

(3)  providing model home plans;

(4)  operating a program to rent or provide tools for home construction and improvement for the benefit of property owners in colonias who are building or repairing a residence or installing necessary residential infrastructure;

(5)  helping to obtain, construct, access, or improve the service and utility infrastructure designed to service residences in a colonia, including potable water, wastewater disposal, drainage, streets, and utilities;

(6)  surveying or platting residential property that an individual purchased without the benefit of a legal survey, plat, or record;

(7)  providing credit and debt counseling related to home purchase and finance;

(8)  applying for grants and loans to provide housing and other needed community improvements;

(9)  providing other services that the self-help center, with the approval of the department, determines are necessary to assist colonia residents in improving their [~~physical~~] living conditions, including help in:

(A)  obtaining suitable alternative housing outside of a colonia's area; and

(B)  performing the following authorized public service activities under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. Section 5301 et seq.):

(i)  securing employment;

(ii)  establishing or expanding a small business; or

(iii)  managing personal finances;

(10)  providing assistance in obtaining loans or grants to enable an individual or a family to acquire fee simple title to property that originally was purchased under a contract for a deed, contract for sale, or other executory contract; and

(11)  providing monthly programs to educate individuals and families on their rights and responsibilities as property owners.

(d)  A self-help center may not provide grants, financing, or mortgage loan services to purchase, build, rehabilitate, or finance construction or improvements to a home or otherwise improve living conditions in a colonia if water service and suitable wastewater disposal are not available.

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.

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