

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 24, 2021

TO: Honorable Jim Murphy, Chair, House Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1259 by Darby (Relating to the rural veterinarian incentive program.), **As Introduced**

The fiscal implications of the bill cannot be determined at this time due to the unavailability of data related to the number of persons that would participate in the loan repayment program and available funding for the program.

The bill would amend the Education Code by transferring sections relating to the Rural Veterinarian Incentive Program to under Subchapter G, Chapter 56. The bill transfers administration of the program from Texas A&M University to the Texas Animal Health Commission. Under provisions of the bill, students enrolled at an accredited college of veterinary medicine located outside the state could also participate in the program, if the student graduated from a high school located in the state or a general academic teaching institution in the state. The bill allows for community or political subdivisions located in rural counties that qualify under the rules of the program, to provide financial support for eligible participants in the program.

The bill establishes a rural veterinarian incentive program account that would be administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. The account is composed of gifts, grants, in-kind contributions, or real or personal property contributed to the account from any individual, group, association, or corporation, earnings on the principal of the account, and other amounts, including money deposited from community or political subdivisions that sponsor eligible participants under the program. Money in the account would be used to support the program and cover administration costs for the Texas Animal Health Commission and the Higher Education Coordinating Board up to a certain percentage. It is assumed any costs to build, house and maintain the data infrastructure that would accept, evaluate, process and approve program applications would come from the account.

This legislation would do one or more of the following: create or recreate a dedicated account in the General Revenue Fund, create or recreate a special or trust fund either with or outside of the Treasury, or create a dedicated revenue source. The fund, account, or revenue dedication included in this bill would be subject to funds consolidation review by the current Legislature.

The fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time due to the lack of available data regarding how many persons will participate in the loan repayment program and available funding for the program.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 554 Animal Health Commission, 710 Texas A&M Univ System Admin, 781 Higher Education Coordinating Board

LBB Staff: JMc, LBO, JSM, GO