

AN ACT

relating to the Rural Veterinarian Incentive Program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 56.101(7), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(7) "Rural county" means a county in this state with a population of less than 150,000 [~~100,000~~].

SECTION 2. Section 56.105(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) To participate as a sponsor in the program, the community or political subdivision must enter into an agreement with the eligible participant to provide financial support to the eligible participant in an amount not less than the tuition and fees required for a full academic year for a student enrolled in a [~~the~~] college in exchange for the eligible participant's agreement to practice veterinary medicine in the sponsoring community or political subdivision.

SECTION 3. Sections 56.106(a) and (b), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) To participate in the program, an eligible participant must enter into an agreement with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [~~university system~~] that:

(1) requires the participant to practice veterinary medicine in a rural county for one calendar year for each academic

1 year for which the participant receives financial support under the  
2 program;

3 (2) specifies the conditions the participant must  
4 satisfy to receive financial support under the program;

5 (3) provides that any financial support the  
6 participant receives under the program constitutes a loan until the  
7 participant satisfies the conditions of the agreement; and

8 (4) requires the participant to sign a promissory note  
9 acknowledging the conditional nature of the financial support  
10 received under the program and promising to repay the amount of the  
11 financial support, any applicable interest, and reasonable  
12 collection costs if the participant does not satisfy the conditions  
13 of the agreement.

14 (b) The financial support received by an eligible  
15 participant under this subchapter must be used to retire student  
16 loan debt or to pay tuition and fees to a college [~~the university~~  
17 ~~system~~] while the eligible participant is enrolled in the college.

18 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
22 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2026 was passed by the House on May 2, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 112, Nays 33, 1 present, not voting; that the House refused to concur in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2026 on May 23, 2023, and requested the appointment of a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the House adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 2026 on May 28, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 118, Nays 26, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

H.B. No. 2026

I certify that H.B. No. 2026 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 18, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 27, Nays 4; at the request of the House, the Senate appointed a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the Senate adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 2026 on May 27, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 27, Nays 4.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Governor