

By: Guerra, Muñoz, Jr., Gamez, Longoria,
Canales, et al.

H.B. No. 2171

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the establishment of the Texas Center for Rural Health
3 Education at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

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

5 SECTION 1. Chapter 79, Education Code, is amended by adding
6 Section 79.11 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 79.11. TEXAS CENTER FOR RURAL HEALTH EDUCATION. (a)
8 In this section, "center" means the Texas Center for Rural Health
9 Education.

10 (b) The Texas Center for Rural Health Education is
11 established at the university.

12 (c) The organization, control, and management of the center
13 are vested in the board.

14 (d) Subject to the availability of money appropriated,
15 gifted, or granted for the purposes of the center, the center shall:

16 (1) perform an initial assessment of rural health
17 education in this state;

18 (2) develop appropriate performance metrics to
19 measure improvement in rural health education and health care
20 outcomes;

21 (3) conduct research regarding rural health
22 education, including research to identify:

23 (A) best practices in rural health education; and

24 (B) underserved rural areas;

1 (4) develop recommendations regarding the allocation
2 of funding for tuition and loan repayment programs available to
3 rural health care professionals;

4 (5) develop partnerships between high schools,
5 postsecondary institutions of higher education, and local medical
6 systems to recruit, train, and retain health care professionals to
7 serve in underserved rural areas;

8 (6) develop a plan to improve rural health education
9 and health care outcomes; and

10 (7) develop and maintain an Internet website that
11 provides information regarding rural health education research and
12 resources.

13 (e) Subject to the availability of money appropriated,
14 gifted, or granted for the purposes of the center, not later than
15 December 1 of each even-numbered year, the center shall submit to
16 the legislature a report on rural health education and health care
17 outcomes in this state. The report must include a summary of the
18 center's activities under Subsection (d) and any recommendations
19 for legislative or other action.

20 (f) The university shall encourage public or private
21 entities to participate in or support the operation of the center
22 and may enter into an agreement with any public or private entity
23 for that purpose. An agreement may allow the center to provide
24 information, services, or other assistance to an entity in exchange
25 for the entity's participation or support.

26 (g) The board may solicit, accept, and administer gifts and
27 grants from any public or private source for the purposes of the

1 center.

2 (h) The board may employ personnel for the center as
3 necessary.

4 (i) The board may adopt rules as necessary to implement this
5 section.

6 SECTION 2. Not later than December 1, 2024, the Texas Center
7 for Rural Health Education shall submit to the legislature the
8 first biennial report required under Section 79.11, Education Code,
9 as added by this Act.

10 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.