

By: Cain

H.B. No. 4693

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to entities that provide services to rural Texans and in
3 rural counties.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 58.093, Agriculture Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 58.093. AMOUNT OF GRANTS. A grant under the young
8 farmer grant program may not be less than \$5,000 or more than
9 \$35,000 [~~\$20,000~~].

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, Subsection 12.051
11 is amended to read as follows:

12 Sec. 12.051. FARMER MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION
13 PROGRAM.

14 (a) The department shall establish a farmer mental health
15 and suicide prevention program to raise awareness among farmers of
16 issues relating to mental health and suicide prevention.

17 (b) As part of the program, the department shall:

18 (1) promote suicide prevention among farmers through a
19 public awareness campaign;

20 (2) provide a toll-free telephone hotline for farmer
21 mental health assistance;

22 (3) develop a mental wellness plan for farmers
23 affected by a disaster; [and]

24 (4) coordinate suicide prevention activities with

1 other state agencies, including the Department of State Health
2 Services; [.]

3 (5) identify counties where farmers reside and where
4 an inadequate number of mental health providers are located; and

5 (6) develop strategies to increase the number of
6 mental health providers located in those counties.

7 SECTION 3. Subchapter D, Chapter 48, Education Code, is
8 amended by adding Section 48.114(d) to read as follows:

9 (d) A mentor teacher who provides services at a rural
10 campus, as defined by Section 48.112(a) shall be eligible for
11 compensation in excess of the amounts provided in Subsection (c) if
12 the district is able to fund such compensation from sources other
13 than the mentor program allotment.

14 SECTION 4. Subchapter H, Chapter 301, Occupations Code, is
15 amended by adding Sections 301.357 and 301.358 to read as follows:

16 Sec. 301.357. PRACTICE IN RURAL HELTHCARE AREAS BY CERTAIN
17 ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES. (a) This section and Section
18 301.358 apply to a licensed advanced practice registered nurse only
19 if 85% or more of the nurse's services are provided in a rural
20 healthcare area.

21 (b) In this section and Section 301.358:

22 (1) "advanced practice registered nurse" has the
23 meaning assigned by Section 301.152(a);

24 (2) "controlled substance" has the meaning assigned by
25 Section 481.002, Health and Safety Code;

26 (3) "dangerous drug" has the meaning assigned by
27 Section 483.001, Health and Safety Code;

1 (4) "device" has the meaning assigned by Section
2 551.003, and includes durable medical equipment;

3 (5) "licensed rural practitioner" means a licensed
4 advanced practice registered nurse authorized by the board to
5 practice under this section and under Section 301.358 in accordance
6 with standards established and recognized by the board to protect
7 the public health and safety; and

8 (6) "nonprescription drug" has the meaning assigned by
9 Section 551.003; and

10 (7) "rural healthcare area" has the meaning assigned
11 by Section 12.052, Agriculture Code.

12 (c) The board shall authorize the practice under this
13 section and Section 301.358 of an advanced practice registered
14 nurse who applies in the manner the board prescribes by rule and who
15 meets the requirements for authorization. An advanced practice
16 registered nurse who applies for authorization must file an
17 affidavit with the board demonstrating that the nurse meets the
18 requirements of Subsection (a).

19 (d) The board by rule shall establish:

20 (1) standards for licensed rural practitioners to
21 protect the public health and safety; and

22 (2) guidelines for continuing education for licensed
23 rural practitioners that are not subject to the limitations of
24 Section 301.303(b).

25 (e) The scope of practice of a licensed rural practitioner
26 includes:

27 (1) ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic

1 tests;

2 (2) formulating primary and differential medical

3 diagnoses and advanced assessments;

4 (3) treating actual and potential health problems;

5 (4) prescribing therapeutic and corrective measures,

6 including nutrition and diagnostic support services, home health

7 care, hospice care, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, and

8 delegating and assigning the performance of therapeutic and

9 corrective measures to assistive personnel;

10 (5) to the extent authorized by the board under

11 Section 301.358, prescribing, ordering, procuring, administering,

12 and dispensing drugs and devices, including blood and blood

13 products, controlled substances listed in Schedules II, III, IV,

14 and V, dangerous drugs, and nonprescription drugs;

15 (6) providing referrals to health care agencies,

16 health care providers, and community resources;

17 (7) serving as the primary care provider of record;

18 and

19 (8) performing other acts that require education and

20 training consistent with professional standards and that are

21 commensurate with the licensed rural practitioner's education,

22 license, authorization to practice under this section and Section

23 301.358, and competencies and experience.

24 (f) A licensed rural practitioner is accountable to

25 patients, the nursing profession, and the board for:

26 (1) complying with the requirements of this chapter;

27 (2) providing quality advanced nursing care;

1 (3) recognizing the nurse's limits of knowledge;
2 (4) planning for the management of situations beyond
3 the nurse's expertise; and
4 (5) consulting with or referring patients to other
5 health care providers as appropriate.

6 (g) This section does not limit or modify the scope of
7 practice of a nurse who is not authorized to practice under this
8 section.

9 (h) A law that authorizes a licensed physician assistant or
10 advanced practice registered nurse acting on behalf of or under
11 authority delegated by a physician to take an action is considered
12 to authorize a licensed rural practitioner to take the action.

13 Sec. 301.358. PRESCRIBING AND ORDERING AUTHORITY OF
14 LICENSED RURAL PRACTITIONER. (a) The board by rule may authorize a
15 licensed rural practitioner to prescribe and order drugs and
16 devices, including controlled substances listed in Schedules II,
17 III, IV, and V, dangerous drugs, and nonprescription drugs.

18 (b) The board may establish the level of demonstrated
19 proficiency required to take authorized actions under the rules
20 adopted under Subsection (a).

21 SECTION 5. Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, is amended by
22 adding Section 12.052 to read as follows:

23 Sec. 12.052 RURAL HEALTHCARE AREAS. (a) A "Rural

24 Healthcare Area" is defined as:

25 (1) any location in a rural county as defined by
26 Section 487.301, Government Code;

27 (2) a Rural Health Facility Capital Improvement

1 Program defined entity; or

2 (3) any location where a person whose primary
3 residence is in a rural county as defined by Section 487.301,
4 Government Code receives healthcare.

5 SECTION 6. Section 61.9606, Education Code is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 61.9606. REPAYMENT. (a) Except as provided by Section
8 61.9609(a), the board shall provide repayment assistance under this
9 subchapter in the following amounts:

10 (1) [60] 75 percent of each payment due on an
11 attorney's eligible loans during the first 12-month period after
12 the attorney enters into the agreement under Section 61.9605;

13 (2) 80 percent of each payment due on an attorney's
14 eligible loans during the second 12-month period after the attorney
15 enters into the agreement; and

16 (3) 100 percent of each payment due on an attorney's
17 eligible loans during the third 12-month period after the attorney
18 enters into the agreement.

19 (b) The board shall deliver any repayment assistance made
20 under this subchapter in a lump sum payable to the lender and the
21 attorney and in accordance with any applicable federal law.

22 (c) Loan repayment assistance received under this
23 subchapter may be applied to the principal amount of the loan and to
24 interest that accrues.

25 SECTION 7. The change in law made by Section 1 applies to a
26 grant issued on or after the effective date of this Act. A grant
27 issued before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law

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1 in effect on the date the grant is issued, and the former law is
2 continued in effect for that purpose.

3 SECTION 8. Not later than February 1, 2024, the Texas Board
4 of Nursing shall adopt the rules necessary to implement the changes
5 in law made by this Act.

6 SECTION 9. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.