

By: Cain

H.B. No. 4693

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(3) develop a mental wellness plan for farmers affected by a disaster; ~~and~~

(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

H.B. No. 4693

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.