

By: Johnson

S.B. No. 1733

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a housing assistance pilot program to assist certain students enrolled in public junior colleges.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 130, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter N to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N. HOUSING ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM

Sec. 130.401. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "pilot program" means the housing assistance pilot program established under this subchapter.

Sec. 130.402. PILOT PROGRAM PURPOSE. The purpose of the pilot program is to provide needs-based grants to assist eligible students in the payment of the cost of maintaining housing, including payments for eviction prevention, rental payments, and deposit fees for rental units.

Sec. 130.403. ADMINISTRATION OF PILOT PROGRAM. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall administer the pilot program in coordination with the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, and the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless. The coordinating board shall:

(1) create a housing assistance fund for the duration of the pilot program; and

(2) deposit in the fund for each academic year of the

1 pilot program an amount equal to the amount of any gifts, grants,
2 donations, or appropriations designated for the program.

3 (b) If the pilot program is not continued by law as of August
4 31, 2027, any money remaining in the fund shall be credited to the
5 general revenue fund on that date.

6 Sec. 130.404. ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS. A junior college
7 district with an enrollment of 40,000 students or more is eligible
8 to participate in the pilot program.

9 Sec. 130.405. ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANT. (a) The coordinating
10 board, in consultation with the staff of the participating public
11 junior colleges, including student support specialists, the Texas
12 Homeless Network, and homeless response system leads for the areas
13 in which participating junior colleges are located, shall establish
14 eligibility criteria for students to receive a grant under the
15 pilot program. The eligibility criteria must:

16 (1) require an applicant to be enrolled at a
17 participating public junior college; and

18 (2) allow for the consideration of an applicant's
19 FAFSA application data or other relevant information.

20 (b) The coordinating board may apply the eligibility
21 criteria to create a formula for the disbursement of money under the
22 pilot program.

23 Sec. 130.406. THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR. (a) The Texas
24 Higher Education Coordinating Board may contract with a third party
25 to design and administer the pilot program in consultation with the
26 Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the Texas
27 Interagency Council for the Homeless.

1 (b) A third party administrator shall report to the
2 coordinating board and the Texas Education Agency in the manner
3 agreed to under a contract entered into under this section.

4 Sec. 130.407. REPORTS. (a) Not later than October 1 of
5 each even-numbered year, the coordinating board shall prepare a
6 report on the effectiveness of the pilot program. The report must
7 include a recommendation regarding whether the pilot program should
8 be continued, expanded, or terminated.

9 (b) The coordinating board shall deliver a copy of the
10 report to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of
11 representatives, and each standing committee of the legislature
12 having primary jurisdiction over higher education.

13 Sec. 130.408. EXPIRATION. This subchapter expires
14 September 1, 2027.

15 SECTION 2. Subchapter N, Chapter 130, Education Code, as
16 added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2023-2024 academic
17 year.

18 SECTION 3. 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.