By: Bonnen H.B. No. 291

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to medical school admissions, coursework, academic standards, and employment decisions in this state.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter F, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.3095 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.3095. CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION COURSEWORK AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS REVISIONS. (a) In this section, "medical school" means:

(1) a medical school as defined by Section 61.501; or

(2) any other institution of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, or school, department, or college of such an institution, that awards medical degrees.

(b) Each medical school shall ensure that at least 50 percent of the coursework offered in the curriculum required for a medical degree or certificate assesses a student's performance on the coursework based on the assignment of a letter grade from A to F or a tiered system with at least four designations.

(c) Except as required to comply with state or federal law, a medical school may not revise its academic standards for the award of a degree or certificate unless the medical school submits to the legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

(1) a copy of the proposed standards;

(2) a concise general statement of the reasons for the

proposed standards; and

(3) the date on which the proposed standards would become effective.

SECTION 2. Subchapter W, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.8425 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.8425. CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSION. (a) In this section, "medical school" has the meaning assigned by Section 51.3095.

(b) In making admissions decisions for a medical degree or certificate program, a medical school shall consider an applicant's performance on a standardized test appropriate for the program that focuses on knowledge of and critical thinking applicable to science and medical practice, except that the applicant's performance on the standardized test may not be used as the sole criterion for consideration of the applicant.

(c) Except as required to comply with state or federal law, a medical school may not revise its academic standards for the admission of a student to the medical school or to a degree or certificate program unless the medical school submits to the legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

(1) a copy of the proposed standards;

(2) a concise general statement of the reasons for the proposed standards; and

(3) the date on which the proposed standards would become effective.

SECTION 3. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.9247 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.9247. CONSIDERATION OF RACE, SEX, COLOR, ETHNICITY, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN IN MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS PROHIBITED. (a) In this section, "medical school" has the meaning assigned by Section 51.3095.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a medical school may not grant preference on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin to an applicant:

(1) for admission to the medical school or to a degree or certificate program; or

(2) for employment by the medical school.

(c) Nothing in this section may be construed as prohibiting bona fide qualifications based on sex that are reasonably necessary to the normal operation of a medical school.

SECTION 4. Section 51.3095(b), Education Code, as added by this Act, applies only to coursework offered to students who initially enroll in a medical school for the 2026 fall semester or a subsequent academic term.

SECTION 5. The changes in law made by this Act to admissions at medical schools apply beginning with admissions for the 2026 fall semester. Admissions for an academic period preceding that semester are governed by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

Act takes effect September 1, 2025.