

By: Gerdes, Gates, Bell of Kaufman, et al.

H.B. No. 2545

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 302, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 302.0039 to read as follows:

Sec. 302.0039. RURAL WORKFORCE TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "program" means the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program established under this section.

(b) The commission shall establish and administer the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program for the purpose of providing targeted funding for job-specific workforce training and related services to strengthen the skills, resources, and career opportunities of the rural workforce in this state.

(c) Under the program, the commission shall award grants to public, private, or nonprofit entities, including business associations, political subdivisions, local workforce development boards, and educational institutions, that:

(1) provide on-the-job training, apprenticeships, workforce education courses, and other job-specific workforce development activities in a county with a population of less than 200,000; and

(2) apply to the commission in the manner provided by commission rule.

1 (d) Grant money awarded to an entity under the program may
2 be used only to cover costs associated with training materials,
3 instructors' fees, participant wraparound expenses, facility fees,
4 administrative costs, and outreach, mentoring, and recruiting
5 costs for the training, apprenticeship, course, or other activity
6 for which the money is awarded.

7 (e) The commission shall require a grant recipient to
8 provide periodic reports regarding the recipient's use of grant
9 money received under the program and related training participant
10 outcomes.

11 (f) The commission may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and
12 donations from any public or private source for purposes of the
13 program.

14 (g) The commission shall adopt rules for the administration
15 of the program.

16 (h) Not later than December 1 of each year, the commission
17 shall submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker
18 of the house of representatives, and the standing committee of each
19 house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over workforce
20 development matters a report regarding:

21 (1) the grants awarded under the program during the
22 most recent state fiscal year; and

23 (2) the program's effectiveness.

24 SECTION 2. The Texas Workforce Commission shall adopt the
25 rules required under Section 302.0039(g), Labor Code, as added by
26 this Act, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this
27 Act.

1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.