

By: Perry

S.B. No. 1377

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a grant program to provide financial assistance to qualified ambulance service providers in certain rural counties.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 130, Local Government Code, is amended by adding Section 130.914 to read as follows:

Sec. 130.914. RURAL AMBULANCE SERVICE GRANT PROGRAM. (a)

In this section:

(1) "Grant program" means the rural ambulance service grant program established by this section.

(2) "Qualified county" is a county that has a population of 68,750 or less.

(3) "Qualified rural ambulance service provider" means a private safety entity or public agency as those terms are defined by Section 772.001, Health and Safety Code, licensed by the Department of State Health Services to provide emergency medical services and operating predominantly in a rural area.

(b) The comptroller shall establish and administer the rural ambulance service grant program to support the state purpose of ensuring adequate ground ambulance services by providing financial assistance to qualified rural ambulance service providers in qualified counties.

(c) Not later than the 30th day after the first day of a qualified county's fiscal year, the county may submit a grant

1 application to the comptroller. A county may submit only one
2 application each fiscal year. If a county is awarded a grant under
3 this program, the county is ineligible to apply for an additional
4 grant.

5 (d) The comptroller may award a grant to a qualified county
6 using money appropriated to the comptroller for that purpose and
7 only in accordance with a contract between the comptroller and the
8 county that includes conditions providing the comptroller with
9 sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of providing
10 adequate ground ambulance services is accomplished. In awarding
11 grants, the comptroller shall consider:

12 (1) the distance from a qualified county's county seat
13 to the nearest Level I trauma facility; and

14 (2) the county's ability to otherwise obtain the money
15 necessary to provide adequate ground ambulance services.

16 (e) The comptroller may award a grant under this section
17 only in the following applicable amount:

18 (1) for a county with a population of less than 10,000,
19 an amount not to exceed \$500,000; or

20 (2) for a county with a population between 10,000 and
21 68,750, an amount not to exceed \$350,000.

22 (f) A qualified county awarded a grant under this section
23 may use or authorize the use of the grant money only to purchase
24 ambulances as provided by comptroller rule.

25 (g) A qualified county awarded a grant under this section
26 may not reduce the budget of the qualified rural ambulance service
27 provider for the county's next fiscal year following the fiscal

1 year of the grant award.

2 (h) The comptroller may disburse a grant award to a
3 qualified county before the county places an order for an
4 ambulance. The county shall purchase and take possession of an
5 ambulance with money awarded under the grant program not later than
6 the fifth anniversary of the date the county receives the money.
7 The comptroller shall adopt rules necessary to implement this
8 section, including rules to establish:

9 (1) a standardized application process, the form to
10 apply for a grant, and the manner of submitting the form;

11 (2) deadlines for:

12 (A) applying for a grant;

13 (B) disbursing grant money; and

14 (C) spending grant money;

15 (3) procedures for:

16 (A) monitoring the disbursement of grant money to
17 ensure compliance with this section; and

18 (B) requiring the return of grant money awarded
19 if a county fails to use the money for a purpose authorized by this
20 section; and

21 (4) the type of ground ambulance vehicles that may be
22 purchased with grant money.

23 SECTION 2. A qualified county, as defined by Section
24 130.914(a)(2), Local Government Code, as added by this Act, may
25 apply for a rural ambulance service grant on or after January 1,
26 2026.

27 SECTION 3. Not later than January 1, 2026, the comptroller

S.B. No. 1377

1 of public accounts shall establish and administer the rural
2 ambulance service grant program and adopt the rules necessary to
3 implement the program as required by Section 130.914, Local
4 Government Code, as added by this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.