

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R4791 KSD-D

C.S.S.B. 31
By: Nelson et al.
Health & Human Services
4/11/2007
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Only nine percent of Texas physicians practice in rural areas, despite the fact that 13 percent of the state's population lives in rural communities.

C.S.S.B. 31 requires the creation of a scholarship program to encourage medical students to enter into rural medicine programs and to meet the need for more rural providers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive committee of the Office of Rural Community Affairs in SECTION 1 (Section 487.706, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 487, Government Code, by adding Subchapter P, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER P. RURAL PHYSICIAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 487.701. DEFINITION. Defines "rural medically underserved area."

Sec. 487.702. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. Requires the Office of Rural Community Affairs (office), in accordance with this subchapter and rules adopted by the executive committee of the office (executive committee), to establish and administer a scholarship program for medical students who agree to practice medicine in rural medically underserved areas.

Sec. 487.703. ELIGIBILITY. Sets forth certain eligibility requirements for students to receive scholarships under this subchapter.

Sec. 487.704. AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS. (a) Requires a person to enter into a written agreement with the office in order to qualify for the scholarship. Sets forth the requirements and conditions of the agreement between the person and the office.

(b) Requires the office to determine the terms of the promissory note required by Subsection (a)(4). Requires the terms, to the extent practicable, to be the same as those applicable to state or federally guaranteed student loans made at the same time.

Sec. 487.705. GRANTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS. Authorizes the office to solicit and accept grants, gifts, and donations from any public or private source for the scholarship program, in addition to funds appropriated by the legislature.

Sec. 487.706. RULES. Requires the executive committee to adopt rules necessary to administer this subchapter. Requires the office to distribute a copy of the adopted rules to each medical school of a public or private institution of higher education in Texas.

SECTION 2. Requires the executive committee to adopt rules regarding the rural physician training scholarship program no later than December 31, 2007.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.