

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a grant program to support community mental health programs for veterans and their families.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 531.0992 to read as follows:

Sec. 531.0992. GRANT PROGRAM FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. (a) To the extent funds are appropriated to the commission for that purpose, the commission shall establish a grant program for the purpose of supporting community mental health programs providing services and treatment to veterans and their families.

(b) The commission shall enter into an agreement with a qualified nonprofit or private entity to serve as the administrator of the grant program. The duties of the administrator must include assisting, supporting, and advising the commission in fulfilling the commission's responsibilities with respect to the grant program. The administrator may advise the commission on:

(1) designing, developing, implementing, and managing the program;

(2) determining criteria for local community collaboration and the types of services and deliveries eligible for grants;

(3) eligibility requirements for grant recipients;

1           (4) designing and managing the competitive bidding  
2 processes for applications or proposals and the evaluation and  
3 selection of grant recipients;

4           (5) contractual requirements for grant recipients;

5           (6) grant requisites and mechanisms;

6           (7) roles and responsibilities of grant recipients;

7           (8) reporting requirements for grant recipients;

8           (9) support and technical capabilities;

9           (10) requisite timelines and deadlines for the  
10 program;

11           (11) evaluation of the program and grant recipients;

12 and

13           (12) requirements for reporting on the program to  
14 policy makers.

15           (c) The private entity that supports and administers the  
16 grant program shall obtain or secure contributions to the grant  
17 program in an amount of money or other consideration at least equal  
18 in value to the amount of money awarded to grant recipients by the  
19 commission under the grant program. The money or other  
20 consideration obtained or secured by the private entity may, as  
21 determined by the executive commissioner, include cash or in-kind  
22 contributions from private contributors or local governments but  
23 may not include state or federal funds.

24           (d) Money appropriated to, or obtained by, the commission  
25 for the grant program must be disbursed directly to grant  
26 recipients by the commission, as authorized by the executive  
27 commissioner. Money or other consideration obtained or secured by

1 the private entity must be disbursed or provided directly to grant  
2 recipients by the private entity, private contributors, or local  
3 governments, as authorized by the executive commissioner.

4 (e) All grants awarded under the grant program must be used  
5 for the sole purpose of supporting community programs that provide  
6 mental health care services and treatment to veterans and their  
7 families and that coordinate mental health care services for  
8 veterans and their families with other transition support services.

9 (f) The commission shall select grant recipients based on  
10 the submission of applications or proposals by nonprofit and  
11 governmental entities. The executive commissioner shall develop  
12 criteria for the evaluation of those applications or proposals and  
13 the selection of grant recipients. The selection criteria must:

- 14 (1) evaluate and score:  
15 (A) fiscal controls for the project;  
16 (B) project effectiveness;  
17 (C) project cost; and  
18 (D) an applicant's previous experience with  
19 grants and contracts;

20 (2) address the possibility of and method for making  
21 multiple awards; and

22 (3) include other factors that the executive  
23 commissioner considers relevant.

24 (g) The executive commissioner shall use a noncompetitive  
25 procurement procedure to select a qualified nonprofit or private  
26 entity to administer a pilot program of the grant program  
27 established under this section. In selecting the qualified

1 nonprofit or private entity, the executive commissioner must  
2 consider the purposes of the program and the duties of the program  
3 administrator described in this section.

4 (h) The executive commissioner shall adopt any rules  
5 necessary to implement the grant program under this section.

6 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
7 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
8 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
9 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
10 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 55 passed the Senate on April 9, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; May 20, 2015, Senate refused to concur in House amendments and requested appointment of Conference Committee; May 24, 2015, House granted request of the Senate; May 30, 2015, Senate adopted Conference Committee Report by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 55 passed the House, with amendments, on May 19, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 136, Nays 5, one present not voting; May 24, 2015, House granted request of the Senate for appointment of Conference Committee; May 30, 2015, House adopted Conference Committee Report by the following vote: Yeas 136, Nays 7, two present not voting.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor