

1-1 By: Darby, et al. (Senate Sponsor - LaMantia) H.B. No. 2026  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 3, 2023;  
 1-3 May 4, 2023, read first time and referred to Subcommittee on Higher  
 1-4 Education; May 12, 2023, reported favorably from Committee on  
 1-5 Education by the following vote: Yeas 11, Nays 2; May 12, 2023,  
 1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8				
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11		X		
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14		X		
1-15	X			
1-16	X			
1-17	X			
1-18	X			
1-19	X			
1-20	X			
1-21	X			

1-22 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-23 AN ACT

1-24 relating to the Rural Veterinarian Incentive Program.  
 1-25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:  
 1-26 SECTION 1. Sections 56.101(2) and (7), Education Code, are  
 1-27 amended to read as follows:  
 1-28 (2) "College" means a college of veterinary medicine  
 1-29 ~~[located in this state and]~~ accredited by the American Veterinary  
 1-30 Medical Association Council on Education.  
 1-31 (7) "Rural county" means a county in this state with a  
 1-32 population of less than 150,000 ~~[100,000]~~.  
 1-33 SECTION 2. Section 56.103(d), Education Code, is amended to  
 1-34 read as follows:  
 1-35 (d) The committee shall adopt rules:  
 1-36 (1) establishing criteria to determine whether a  
 1-37 person is an eligible participant as the committee considers  
 1-38 reasonable, including the person's:  
 1-39 (A) background and interest in rural practice;  
 1-40 and  
 1-41 (B) financial need;  
 1-42 (2) providing for requesting the distribution of money  
 1-43 from the account for the program;  
 1-44 (3) establishing the criteria necessary for a  
 1-45 community or political subdivision in a rural county to qualify as a  
 1-46 student sponsor under Section 56.105;  
 1-47 (4) governing agreements of financial support between  
 1-48 a rural sponsor and an eligible student;  
 1-49 (5) establishing preferential treatment in the  
 1-50 selection process for applicants who:  
 1-51 (A) are residents of this state;  
 1-52 (B) graduated from a high school located in this  
 1-53 state or general academic teaching institution located in this  
 1-54 state; or  
 1-55 (C) graduated from an accredited college of  
 1-56 veterinary medicine in this state; and  
 1-57 (6) ~~(5)~~ establishing other procedures necessary to  
 1-58 administer the program.  
 1-59 SECTION 3. Section 56.104, Education Code, is amended to  
 1-60 read as follows:  
 1-61 Sec. 56.104. ELIGIBLE VETERINARY STUDENT OR GRADUATE. A

2-1 [~~(a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a~~] person is eligible to  
2-2 participate in the program only if the person:

2-3 (1) is enrolled as a student of a ~~[the]~~ college or  
2-4 applies to participate in the program on or before the fourth  
2-5 anniversary of the date the person graduates from a ~~[the]~~ college;

2-6 (2) will receive or has received from a student loan at  
2-7 least 50 percent of the funds for tuition and fees for one or more  
2-8 academic years while enrolled in the college; and

2-9 (3) meets any additional qualifications adopted by the  
2-10 committee.

2-11 [~~(b) A person enrolled as a student in an accredited college  
2-12 of veterinary medicine located outside of this state may apply  
2-13 under Subsection (a) to participate in the program if the student  
2-14 graduated from a high school located in this state or a general  
2-15 academic teaching institution located in this state.~~]

2-16 SECTION 4. Section 56.105(b), Education Code, is amended to  
2-17 read as follows:

2-18 (b) To participate as a sponsor in the program, the  
2-19 community or political subdivision must enter into an agreement  
2-20 with the eligible participant to provide financial support to the  
2-21 eligible participant in an amount not less than the tuition and fees  
2-22 required for a full academic year for a student enrolled in a ~~[the]~~  
2-23 college in exchange for the eligible participant's agreement to  
2-24 practice veterinary medicine in the sponsoring community or  
2-25 political subdivision.

2-26 SECTION 5. Sections 56.106(a) and (b), Education Code, are  
2-27 amended to read as follows:

2-28 (a) To participate in the program, an eligible participant  
2-29 must enter into an agreement with the Texas Higher Education  
2-30 Coordinating Board ~~[university system]~~ that:

2-31 (1) requires the participant to practice veterinary  
2-32 medicine in a rural county for one calendar year for each academic  
2-33 year for which the participant receives financial support under the  
2-34 program;

2-35 (2) specifies the conditions the participant must  
2-36 satisfy to receive financial support under the program;

2-37 (3) provides that any financial support the  
2-38 participant receives under the program constitutes a loan until the  
2-39 participant satisfies the conditions of the agreement; and

2-40 (4) requires the participant to sign a promissory note  
2-41 acknowledging the conditional nature of the financial support  
2-42 received under the program and promising to repay the amount of the  
2-43 financial support, any applicable interest, and reasonable  
2-44 collection costs if the participant does not satisfy the conditions  
2-45 of the agreement.

2-46 (b) The financial support received by an eligible  
2-47 participant under this subchapter must be used to retire student  
2-48 loan debt or to pay tuition and fees to a college ~~[the university  
2-49 system]~~ while the eligible participant is enrolled in the college.

2-50 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2-51 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2-52 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2-53 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
2-54 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

2-55 \* \* \* \* \*