

SUBJECT: Requiring a statewide study of shortages in health professions

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — C. Turner, Stucky, Button, Frullo, Howard, E. Johnson,  
Pacheco, Smithee, Walle

1 nay — Schaefer

1 absent — Wilson

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Ashley Williams, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Jesse Ozuna, DHR Health; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers-Texas Chapter; Maureen Milligan, Teaching Hospitals of Texas; Jim Dow, Texas Academy of Anesthesia Assistants; Deanna L. Kuykendall, Texas Association of Naturopathic Doctors; Roland Leal, Texas Association of Nurse Anesthetists; Steve Koebele, Texas Association of Physical Therapists; Stephanie Smith, Texas Dental Hygiene Association; Bradford Shields, Texas Federation of Drug Stores; Troy Alexander, Texas Medical Association; Denise Rose, Texas Occupational Therapy Association; Craig Tounget, Texas Physical Therapy Association; Kevin Stewart, Texas Psychological Association; Joe Garcia, University Medical Center-El Paso; John Pitts Jr, Western Governor's University-Texas)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lisa Wyman, Texas Department of State Health Services; Rex Peebles, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)

DIGEST: CSHB 80 would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to conduct a study on shortages in certain health professions.

The study, which would be subject to availability of funds, would be conducted in collaboration with the Texas Health Professions Resource

Center, the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies, and the Texas Demographic Center. The study would identify statewide and regional shortages in health professions, with an emphasis on doctoral-level training. The board would develop an inventory of existing health science education programs and each program's enrollment capacity.

The study would analyze shortages in professions including medicine, dentistry, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, psychology, pharmacy, public health, and speech-language pathology.

The board would be required to make recommendations regarding the establishment and expansion of programs to meet the increased need for health professionals in the state, and, by December 1, 2023, submit these along with the results of the study to certain state officials.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board would be authorized to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source for the commission of the study and recommendations.

The provisions of the bill would expire January 1, 2024.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

CSHB 80 would help Texas identify workforce needs across a broad spectrum of health care professions and develop efficient, region-specific solutions to meet those needs. It is essential that the state has a ready supply of a variety of doctoral-level professionals to address current demands and prepare for future population growth.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

Although well intentioned, CSHB 80 would mandate a study on information that the Department of State Health Services already collects through health professional shortage area designations.

