

- SUBJECT:** Establishing the Texas youth livestock show grant program and fund
- COMMITTEE:** Agriculture and Livestock — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Burns, Anderson, Bailes, Cole, Cyrier, Herrero, Rosenthal
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — Guillen, Toth
- WITNESSES:** For — Tommy Neal, Texas Youth Now; Caden Carver; Briana Hicks; Shane Meier; Jonathan Olivarez; Savay Sexton; (*Registered, but did not testify*: David Sinclair, Game Warden Peace Officers Association; John Kroll, State Fair of Texas; Elizabeth Choate, Texas Veterinary Medical Association; and seven others)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Billy Zanolini, Texas A&M Agrilife; Dan Hunter, Texas Department of Agriculture)
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns have been raised about the negative effect the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the youth livestock show industry in Texas, resulting in the cancellation of youth livestock shows and loss of money and scholarships for youth from the sale and showing of their animals. Some have called for the creation of a Texas youth livestock show grant program to ensure that meaningful opportunities for Texas youth involved in the raising and showing of livestock continue during and after the recovery from the pandemic.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3959 would require the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to establish and administer the Texas youth livestock show grant program. TDA would have to establish grant eligibility requirements, a grant application process, and encourage participation from livestock shows of varying sizes, types of entries, and needs.

Grants under the program could be used only to provide financial assistance to youth livestock shows in the state. To be eligible for a grant, a youth livestock show would have to be part of the youth livestock validation program and have been in existence for less than 10 years or be a regional youth livestock show.

Show fund. The bill would create the Texas youth livestock show fund as an account in the general revenue fund administered by TDA. Money in the account could be used only by the department to provide grants under the program and to promote and encourage donations to the fund. The fund would consist of:

- gifts, grants, including federal grants, and other donations received for the fund;
- interest earned on the investment of money in the fund; and
- any money appropriated to the fund by the legislature.

TDA could accept grants, gifts, or donations from any source that were made for the purposes of the grant program. Money from gifts, grants, or donations would have to be deposited in the Texas youth livestock show fund.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have an estimated negative impact of about \$5.2 million to general revenue through fiscal 2023.