

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 40
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Health & Human Services
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

There is a current shortage of licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) entering or staying in the long-term care field. As proposed, S.B. 40 provides for tuition assistance for LVN students who agree to practice in long-term care settings upon certification.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 61.659, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 61L, Education Code, to add Section 61.659, as follows:

Sec. 61.659. TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR VOCATIONAL NURSING STUDENTS AGREEING TO PRACTICE IN LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES. (a) Defines “long-term care facility.”

(b) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (board), in addition to any other financial aid program established under this subchapter, to establish and administer a tuition assistance program for vocational nursing students attending any school or program in this state who agree, following licensure as a licensed vocational nurse, to practice in a long-term care facility in this state.

(c) Requires the board to establish and administer the tuition assistance program in a manner that the board determines best promotes the needs of clients of long-term care facilities in this state. Requires the board to determine the amount of tuition assistance that a student is authorized to receive as the board considers appropriate in order to maximize the effectiveness of the program, considering the amount of money available for the program.

(d) Requires the board to adopt rules necessary for the administration of this section, including rules providing certain elements.

(e) Requires the student, once the student completes all courses required for licensure, to begin fulfilling the long-term care facility work obligation not later than a time specified by board rule, unless the board grants the student, on a showing of good cause, additional time to begin fulfilling the work obligation. Requires the student to complete the long-term care facility work obligation within a period determined by board rule, unless the board grants the student, on a showing of good cause, additional time to complete the work obligation.

(f) Requires the board to require a person who receives tuition assistance under this section to sign a promissory note acknowledging the conditional nature of the tuition assistance and promising to repay the amount of the tuition assistance plus applicable interest and reasonable collection costs if the person does not satisfy the applicable long-term care facility work

obligation within the required time or other conditions of the assistance. Requires the board to determine the terms of the promissory note.

(g) Requires the board to consult with the advisory committee appointed under Section 61.657(b) concerning assistance provided under this section to vocational nursing students. Provides that Section 61.657(c) also applies to this section.

(h) Authorizes the legislature to appropriate money for the purposes of this section. Authorizes the board to accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source for the purposes of this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.

Requires the board to establish the tuition assistance program under Section 61.659, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as the board determines practicable.