

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
85R6297 MM-D

S.B. 1225  
By: Miles  
Higher Education  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Currently, state hospitals and state supported living centers have had difficulties filling positions for physicians. At the same time, the state is facing a shortage of psychiatrists and that workforce will need to grow significantly in the coming years. The state currently has a physician education loan repayment program (PELRP) to provide loan repayment funds for up to \$160,000 over a period of four years to qualifying physicians. Priority is given to primary care physicians who agree to practice in a health professional shortage area (HPSA) for at least four years.

S.B. 1225 would expand the PELRP to included physicians practicing at state hospitals and state supported living centers. By dedicating PELRP funds to practitioners in the state's mental health system, the state economically incentivizes new physician selection of mental health specialties and works to address the chronic recruitment and retention issues experienced by the state's public mental health system.

We expect physician groups to support the bill and do not anticipate any opposition.

As proposed, S.B. 1225 amends current law relating to eligibility requirements for the repayment of certain physician education loans.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 61.532(a) and (b), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Requires a physician, to be eligible to receive repayment assistance, to have completed one, two, three, or four consecutive years of practice in a state supported living center as defined by Section 531.002 (Definitions), Health and Safety Code, or a state hospital, as defined by Section 552.0011 (Definitions), Health and Safety Code, or in accordance with Subsection (b), after funds have been fully allocated for the program year to physicians qualifying under Paragraph (A) (relating to a certain health professional shortage area) or (B) (relating to the completion of one, two, three, or four consecutive years of practice in certain state supported living centers or state hospitals), and unless the physician qualifies under Subsection (a)(3)(B), provide services to certain persons. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(b) Authorizes a physician to complete one or more years of practice required by Subsection (a)(3)(C), rather than (a)(3), in a location other than an area or facility described by Subsection (a)(3)(A) or (B), rather than a health professional shortage area designated by the Department of State Health Services, if, during the applicable year or years, the physician provides health care services to a designated number of patients who are recipients under the medical assistance program authorized by Chapter 32 (Medical Assistance Program), Human Resources Code, or the Texas Women's Health Program according to certain criteria.

SECTION 2. Makes application of Section 61.532, Education Code, as amended by this Act, prospective to September 1, 2017, regarding eligibility for loan repayment assistance under Subchapter J (Repayment of Certain Physician Education Loans), Chapter 61 (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board), Education Code.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.