



### **HB 3088 (Coleman):**

*Relating to the administration of county mental health grant services established by the Health and Human Services Commission.*

#### **ISSUE**

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Many rural communities in Texas are hesitant to apply to the Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) grant programs due to high matching percentage costs. HB 3088 would reduce matching thresholds, giving more communities the ability to apply for grants from the Community Mental Health Grant Program, Mental Health Grant Program for Justice-Involved Individuals, and Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program. In addition, the bill would eliminate some funding restrictions on Healthy Community Collaboratives (HCCs).

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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- Lower grant programs' match thresholds to enable communities to more affordably fund initiatives helping individuals with mental health/substance use conditions, justice involvement, and veterans.
- Protect future funding for HCCs by easing potential requirements for full self-sustainment. This will promote the reintegration of individuals back into their communities.

#### **BACKGROUND**

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HHSC administers a number of grant programs aimed at improving the mental health and wellness of Texans. The Community Mental Health Grant Program, established by HB 13 (Price, 85<sup>th</sup>), supports organizations that provide services and treatment for people with mental health conditions and unmet behavioral health needs.<sup>1</sup> This initiative is designed to support community collaboration, reduce duplication, and strengthen continuity of care for people with mental health conditions.<sup>2</sup> SB 292 (Huffman, 85<sup>th</sup>) led to HHSC establishing the Mental Health Grant Program for Justice-Involved Individuals, a program that provides grants to eligible county-based community collaboratives to reduce recidivism and incarceration among individuals with mental health conditions.<sup>3</sup> It also works to lesson state hospitals' forensic commitment wait times for people with mental health conditions.<sup>4</sup> The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program, established by SB 55 (Nelson, 85<sup>th</sup>), expands and enhances the quality of mental health treatment/supportive services to veterans and their families.<sup>5,6</sup>

HCCs connect public and private entities so that Texas can better serve adults with mental health/substance use conditions or housing issues. This initiative provides individuals with appropriate services that promote recovery and reintegration into their communities. Current HCCs include the City of Dallas, Haven for Hope in San Antonio, Integral Care in Austin, and My Health My Resources of Tarrant County in Fort Worth.<sup>7</sup> SB 1849 (Whitmire, 85<sup>th</sup>) expanded HCCs into more rural parts of the state with populations of less than 100,000 people.<sup>8</sup>

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health has worked closely with our partners in rural communities, and we can attest that a primary concern is affordability issues of matching grant requests from HHSC's programs. HB 3088 (Coleman, 87<sup>th</sup>) would change the match thresholds to reduce the cost burden for the Community Mental Health Grant Program, Mental Health Grant Program for Justice-Involved Individuals, and Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program. Changes to the matching percentages would be based on the populations of counties in which collaboratives are serving. A report on the success of the matching grant program would be submitted every even-numbered year, a change from the existing language requiring it to be submitted annually. HB 3088 would also eliminate the seven-year timeframe that HCCs currently have to become self-sustaining before allowing HHSC to reduce funding. In addition, the bill would allow HCCs to leverage in-kind contributions/funding from private contributors or local governments, excluding state and federal funds.<sup>9</sup>

#### **SUMMARY**

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By reducing match thresholds for grants, Texas would support grant programs that provide services to individuals with mental health/substance use conditions, are justice-involved, and to veterans and their families. The state could also support HCCs by easing funding restrictions. These grant programs and HCCs are vital to providing services for people transitioning back into their communities.

#### **CONTACT**

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## CITATIONS

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<sup>1</sup> Price. (2017, June 14). HB 13. Retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=85R&Bill=HB13>

<sup>2</sup> HHSC. (n.d.). House Bill 13: Community Mental Health Grant Program. Retrieved from <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/grants/behavioral-health-services/house-bill-13-community-mental-health-grant-program>

<sup>3</sup> Huffman. (2017, June 9). SB 292. Retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/history.aspx?LegSess=85R&Bill=SB292>

<sup>4</sup> HHSC. (n.d.). SB 292: Mental Health Grant Program for Justice-Involved Individuals. Retrieved from <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/grants/behavioral-health-services/sb-292-mental-health-grant-program-justice-involved-individuals>

<sup>5</sup> HHSC. (n.d.). Texas Veterans Family Alliance Grant Program. Retrieved from <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/grants/behavioral-health-services/texas-veterans-family-alliance-grant-program>

<sup>6</sup> Nelson. (2015, June 4). SB 55. Retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/history.aspx?LegSess=84R&Bill=SB55>

<sup>7</sup> HHSC. (n.d.). Healthy Community Collaborative. Retrieved from <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/behavioral-health-services-providers/healthy-community-collaborative>

<sup>8</sup> Whitmire. (2017, June 15). SB 1849. Retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=85R&Bill=SB1849>

<sup>9</sup> Coleman. (2021, April 14). HB 3088. Retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=HB3088>