

By: Hinojosa

S.B. No. 1963

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's authority to contract with federal agencies to provide healthcare to veterans.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter N, Chapter 74, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 741.761 to read as follows:

Sec. 74.761. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PATIENTS. (a) The medical school may enter into one or more contracts with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") to provide medical and mental health treatment to residents of the county or service area who are otherwise eligible for the VA's health care assistance.

(b) The medical school is encouraged to contribute money, property, and other resources to establish, maintain, and operate a veteran's hospital or provide medical and mental health care to area veterans in accordance with Section 73, Article XVI, Texas Constitution.

(c) In complying with this section, the medical school may prioritize medical and mental health services that eliminate access to care issues and reduce wait times by providing an increased level of inpatient and outpatient care for veterans:

(1)who would be forced to travel more than 200 miles for healthcare; or

(2)who cannot access specialty or primary care in the

1 service area.

2       (d) To the extent possible, the medical school must spread  
3 any available medical and mental health care for veterans  
4 throughout the service region.

5       SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
6 a vote of two-thirds of all members elected to each house, as  
7 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
8 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
9 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.