

SESSION OF 2006

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT BRIEF  
HOUSE BILL NO. 3005**

As Agreed to April 27, 2006

**Brief\***

HB 3005 would establish the Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University (KSU). The purpose of the Program would be to provide encouragement, opportunities and incentives for persons pursuing a veterinary medicine degree program at KSU to locate their veterinary practice in rural Kansas communities and receive specialized training to meet the needs of livestock producers. Preference would be given to those student who are Kansas residents and who agree to serve in specified counties. The Program would be administered by the College of Veterinary Medicine (College) at KSU.

Subject to appropriations, the College would be authorized to enter into agreements with up to five first-year veterinary students per year for a loan in the amount of \$20,000 per year for not more than four years for tuition, books, supplies and other school expenses, and travel and training expenses incurred by the student. The bill would require the persons receiving the loans to:

- Complete the veterinary medicine degree program at the College;
- Complete all advanced training in public health, livestock biosecurity, foreign animal disease diagnosis, and other requirements outlined in the bill; and
- Engage in the full-time practice of veterinary medicine in any county in Kansas which has a population not exceeding 35,000 for a period of one year for each year of assistance provided. (The agreement would continue even if the county population increased beyond the 35,000 during the agreement period.)

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\*Conference committee report briefs are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. No summary is prepared when the report is an agreement to disagree. The conference committee summary report may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

The bill would provide that if the person satisfies all the commitments under the provision of the agreement, the loans provided by the bill would be deemed satisfied and forgiven.

The bill would allow the College to adopt additional provisions, requirements or conditions to participate in this program as are practicable and appropriate. The College would not be permitted to enter into any program agreements after July 1, 2016. All agreements entered into prior to that date would continue in full force and effect.

### **Conference Committee Action**

The House conferees agreed to the Senate version of the bill with the exception of the population of the counties to which those participants could locate their practice. The Conference Committee agreed to increase the population of the target counties to less than 35,000.

### **Background**

This bill was introduced by the House Committee on Appropriations. At the hearing on the bill, representatives of KSU appeared in support of the bill and explained that few of the students at the College were interested in pursuing a large animal practice in rural Kansas. These conferees explained that the bill was patterned from other pieces of legislation which are designed to encourage the practice of certain professions in underserved areas of the state. Also appearing in support of the bill was Representative Sharon Schwartz, one current student in the College, and one student from KSU attempting to enter the College. There were no opponents to the bill.

The House Committee on Agriculture amended the bill to:

- Give preference to Kansas residents;
- Provide that the counties where individuals could serve would be those with populations of less than 35,000;
- Limit the number of years for which loans would be provided to any individual to not more than four;

- Change the payback period from 48 continuous months to 120 continuous months;
- Clarify that regardless of a population change during the duration of the agreement that the original agreement would continue; and
- Provide that the College not enter into any program agreements after July 1, 2016, with existing agreements continuing in full force and effect.

The Senate Committee on Ways and Means amended the bill to reduce the service obligation from 120 months to one year for each year of assistance received. The Committee also limited the service area from counties with a population of 35,000 or less to counties with a population of 25,000 or less.

The Senate Committee of the Whole amended the bill to clarify that the degree is a veterinary medicine degree.

The fiscal note on the original bill indicates that funding required to implement this program in FY 2007 would be \$112,850, \$100,000 for the loans and \$12,850 for a half-time FTE position. The new half-time position would provide administrative support to operate the program. Each year the appropriated amount to fund the loans would be increased by \$100,000 until the annual appropriation reaches \$400,000 in the fourth year.