

BILL SUMMARY
2nd Session of the 60th Legislature

Bill No.:	HB3980
Version:	INT
Request Number:	14383
Author:	Rep. Caldwell (Trey)
Date:	2/24/2026
Impact:	DAC: \$2,500,000 annually beginning FY27

Research Analysis

HB 3980 creates the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program to allow the District Attorneys Council to make direct payments of up to \$5,000 to any private or public entity for which a qualified education loan expense is owed by an eligible employee.

Prepared By: Brad Wolgamott

Fiscal Analysis

HB3980 creates the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program and establishes the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program Revolving Fund in the State Treasury for the District Attorneys Council. The measure creates the fund and authorizes loan repayment assistance of up to \$5,000 annually per eligible assistant district attorney (with a \$50,000 lifetime cap), but does not establish or provide funding. Therefore, in its current form, there is no anticipated material impact on state budget or appropriations. Officials with DAC have provided the following cost analysis:

The Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program is subject to available funding. The bill does not contain any dedicated revenue sources. The DAC would need roughly \$2,500,000 appropriated annually to fully support yearly program payments and program administration. The Program provides for up to \$50,000 per participant in loan repayment assistance for assistant district attorneys, paid out in \$5,000 increments over 10 years. There are currently approximately 320 assistant district attorneys employed across all districts, with ideal/optimal staffing levels of approximately 430 assistant district attorneys. With a potential of \$5,000 payments annually per program applicant and over 430 potential participants, there would need to be roughly \$2,500,000 of available monies in the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program Revolving Fund annually.

Section 3 of the bill creates a new law which prescribes the payments associated with the program. Subsection A limits the payments to \$5,000 in any 12-month period. Subsection B limits the total amount any single employee can receive from the program to \$50,000. Subsection C limits the program payments to loans incurred prior to employment with as an assistant district attorney. Subsection D clarifies the payments are also made to the holder of the loan rather than directly to the employee.

Section 4 of this bill creates a new law which would have program participants pay back any payments should the participant leave employment prior to completion of their term. There is a provision where participants who perform less than the number of required hours of the program's requirements, then the participant shall pay back an amount on a pro rata basis, based upon the actual number of hours worked.

Section 5 creates a new law which prescribes the setup of the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program. Subsection A of the new law prescribes that the eligibility of program candidates shall be determined by a committee composed of DAs in coordination with the DAC. Subsection B requires the selection committee to designate high-need jurisdictions based upon factors including but not limited to population size, remoteness or rural characteristics of the districts, length of vacancies, and other workforce or retention considerations. Subsection C requires program participants to submit documentation of qualified loan obligations.

Section 6 of the bill creates a new law which clarifies that this bill does not create a vested right for loan assistant payments. It also states that loan assistance payments are subject to available funding, and that eligibility in the program is determined by the administering committee of the program.

Section 7 of the bill creates a new law which establishes the new revolving fund in the State Treasury: "Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program Revolving Fund" However, the current version appears to have some errors, because there is no language for Section 7 while there is no citation listed for Section 8. So it is assumed that the citation of Section 7 goes with the language of Section 8 (i.e. there's really only 8 total sections of the bill, with sections 7 & 8 assumed to go together). The new revolving fund would be used for the Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Assistance Program (or Rural District Attorney Loan Repayment Program per Section 2 of the bill)

Therefore, according to the above analysis by the DAC, it is anticipated that the agency would seek \$2,500,000 in annual appropriations to administer the provisions of HB3980.

Prepared By: Robert Flipping IV, House Fiscal Staff

Other Considerations

None.