



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE · April 16, 2019
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Sen. Kelly Hancock Moves Student Loan Repayment Program for Police Officers through Texas Senate

SB 16 provides critical recruitment, retention tool for Texas law enforcement

AUSTIN - Sen. Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) today passed SB 16 through the Texas Senate by a unanimous 31-0 vote. The bill would create a student loan repayment program for Texas peace officers who have served at least four years and commit to a career in law enforcement.

"Our men and women in blue put their lives on the line every day," said Sen. Hancock. "They deserve our sincere appreciation for doing a tough, and too-often thankless, job. This program is designed as a useful recruitment and retention tool for police departments and should be a real financial help to the heroes who serve our communities on a daily basis."

SB 16 directs the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to establish the program and its guidelines by December 1, 2019, with certain eligibility requirements already outlined in the bill. For instance, peace officers must have served four consecutive years as full-time employees, with exceptions for active duty military service or disability leave, and must agree to continued employment for at least another four years.

The outstanding balance and interest of eligible loans could be paid off over a four-year period at a graduated rate, up to \$30,000 per officer. Total funding available for the program would be allocated by each Legislature for the subsequent biennium.

To read the full text of the legislation or follow its progress, visit Texas Legislature Online at <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

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Sen. Hancock represents [District 9](#), which includes portions of Dallas and Tarrant Counties. He currently serves as Chairman of the Texas Senate Committee on Business & Commerce and Vice Chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Transportation.