



# RYAN GUILLEN

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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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## **GUILLEN FIGHTS FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION TREATMENT IN RURAL TEXAS**

*H.B. 3083 Would Increase Incentives for Addiction and Mental Health Professionals to Serve Rural Areas*

**AUSTIN** - Representative Ryan Guillen (D- Rural South Texas) is happy to announce that a bill he was an author of to encourage more health professionals to work in underserved areas in the state, H.B. 3083, has taken effect.

**"There is a severe mental health and addiction problem in this state," said Guillen. "Many Texans, especially rural Texans, are unable to access the health care they need, so we must close this gap."**

H.B. 3083 expands eligibility for the Mental Health Loan Repayment Program. The Mental Health Loan Repayment Program allows mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, and others, to have a portion of their loans forgiven if they practice in an underserved area and work with Medicaid or CHIP patients.

Previously, the program, which was originally authorized during the 84th legislative session in 2015, only required one year of service in order to be eligible and also wasn't available to addiction counselors. H.B. 3083 changed the service requirement to 2 years and expanded the eligibility to addiction counselors with the goal of increasing the amount of professionals working in rural Texas and encouraging them to stay long-term to provide much needed care.

**"There are an estimated 25 million Texans without access to proper mental health care. This is far too many Texans, so something had to be done to address the problem," Guillen added.**

*Serving ten rural South Texas counties in the Texas House of Representatives, Ryan Guillen is known for his hard work, fierce independence, and relentless efforts for South Texas families. Recently, Capitol Inside called him a "House Bill Machine," and a "one-person assembly line for legislation." Since elected, few other legislators have passed more bills than Guillen. Sign up for updates at [ryanguillen.com](http://ryanguillen.com), [facebook.com/representative.guillen](https://facebook.com/representative.guillen), and [twitter.com/ryanguillen](https://twitter.com/ryanguillen)*

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