84(R) SB 55 (Nelson) directed the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish an innovative grant program, known as the Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (TV+FA), to support community mental health programs that provide and coordinate mental health services and treatment for Texas veterans and their families.

- TV+FA provides grants to existing or developing community collaboratives to fund the delivery and coordination of mental health and supportive services.

- Since the 84th Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature has appropriated $20 million per biennium to the grant program. Communities must match these grant dollars on a dollar-for-dollar basis, demonstrating their commitment to meeting the mental health needs of veterans and their families.

The 85th Texas Legislature expanded this innovative funding model to other populations through the creation of two new mental health grant programs.¹ These new grant programs differed from 84(R) SB 55 in two important ways:

- Both grant programs set a lower match requirement for rural areas given the challenge of identifying match in those areas. For these new grant programs, communities only had to match state grants in an amount equal to 50 percent of the grant amount if the community mental health program is located in a county with a population of less than 250,000.

- Neither grant program required HHSC to have a qualified nonprofit or private entity to serve as the administrator of the grant program. The administrator requirement was useful as HHSC initially implemented TV+FA, but this was phased out in 2017.

86(R) SB 822 (Nelson) aligns the requirements of TV+FA with those of the two new mental health grant programs established by the 85th Texas Legislature.

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¹ 85(R) SB 292 (Huffman, Nelson, and Schwertner) created the Mental Health Grant Program for Justice-Involved Individuals to reduce recidivism rates, arrests, and incarceration among people with mental illness as well as reduce the total waiting time for forensic commitment of people with mental illness to a state hospital.

85(R) HB 13 (Price) created the Community Mental Health Grant Program to support community programs that provide mental health care services and treatment – and coordinate mental health care services with other transition support services – for people with mental illnesses.