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## Grant and Gray Counties Sign Up for Rural Incentives Program

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) - More Kansas counties are signing up to participate in a 2011 state program aimed at luring new residents to rural counties with declining populations.

Grant and Gray counties in southwest Kansas have recently voted to participate in a student loan program where new graduates can receive assistance in retiring college debt. The two counties were among 23 counties added to the state's Rural Opportunity Zone program created by Republican Governor Sam Brownback.

The program offers student loan repayment and an income tax credit for new residents moving to participating counties that have lost at least 10 percent of their population over the past decade.

Chris Harris, director of the program in the Kansas Department of Commerce, says Kansas averages one new application for the student loan program each day.

AP