

By: Rodriguez

H.B. No. 2902

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the creation of a task force to study factors
3 contributing to disproportionate COVID-19 outcomes.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

6 (1) "COVID-19" means the 2019 novel coronavirus
7 disease.

8 (2) "Executive commissioner" means the executive
9 commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission.

10 (3) "Task force" means the task force established
11 under Section 2 of this Act.

12 SECTION 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE. The executive
13 commissioner shall establish a task force to:

14 (1) identify and evaluate factors that contribute to
15 the disproportionate development of severe illness,
16 hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19 infection among racial
17 and ethnic minorities;

18 (2) assess this state's data collection practices
19 related to COVID-19 testing and vaccination and the rates of
20 hospitalization and death for people infected with COVID-19;

21 (3) identify and determine the manner in which the
22 factors identified in Subdivision (1) of this section affect
23 population health; and

24 (4) make recommendations for state pandemic response

1 strategies and public health policy, including recommendations for
2 improvements for this state's data collection, virus testing, and
3 immunization strategies.

4 SECTION 3. COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE. (a) The task force
5 is composed of 21 members as follows:

6 (1) one member with relevant expertise, appointed by
7 the governor;

8 (2) two members with relevant expertise, appointed by
9 the lieutenant governor;

10 (3) two members with relevant expertise, appointed by
11 the speaker of the house of representatives;

12 (4) the chair of the Texas Hospital Association or the
13 chair's designee;

14 (5) the president of the Texas Medical Association or
15 the president's designee;

16 (6) the president of the Texas Nurses Association or
17 the president's designee; and

18 (7) 13 members appointed by the executive
19 commissioner, including:

20 (A) one member who is a licensed physician
21 specializing in cardiology;

22 (B) one member who is a licensed physician
23 specializing in pulmonology;

24 (C) one member who represents a hospital located
25 in a rural area of this state;

26 (D) one member who represents a hospital located
27 in a county with a population of at least four million;

1 (E) one member who represents a hospital located
2 in an urban county with a population of less than four million;

3 (F) one member who represents a public hospital;

4 (G) one member who represents a private hospital;

5 (H) two members who represent unaffiliated
6 nonprofit community health organizations focused on reducing
7 racial and ethnic health disparities;

8 (I) one member who represents a community health
9 center;

10 (J) one member who is an epidemiologist;

11 (K) one member who is a statistician; and

12 (L) one member who is a public health expert.

13 (b) The executive commissioner shall appoint a presiding
14 officer of the task force from among the members of the task force.

15 (c) The executive commissioner may fill any vacancy that
16 occurs on the task force and may appoint additional members as
17 needed.

18 SECTION 4. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS. Not later than November
19 1, 2021, the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of
20 representatives, and executive commissioner shall appoint members
21 to the task force.

22 SECTION 5. REPORT. Not later than September 1, 2022, the
23 task force shall prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant
24 governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the
25 members of the legislature a written report on its findings and
26 recommendations, including legislative recommendations.

27 SECTION 6. ABOLISHMENT AND EXPIRATION. The task force is

H.B. No. 2902

1 abolished and this Act expires September 1, 2023.

2 SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September
3 1, 2021.