

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 854
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Regulated Industries
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, parents cannot supervise how their children use the Internet outside the home, in schools and libraries. HB854 will help ensure our Texas libraries and schools take an active role to implement an internet safety policy to protect our children from obscene material.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

Section 1 amends Chapter 32 of the Education Code to add Subchapter D, which includes Sections 32.151 and 32.152. Section 32.151 adds a definition for "internet safety policy" and "obscene." Section 32.152, dealing with limitations on certain funds, states the following:

A public school that provides a computer used to access the Internet is not eligible for a loan or grant under Subchapter C, Chapter 57, Utilities Code (distant learning through video, data, voice, or electronic information) unless the school adopts and implements an Internet safety policy.

"Internet safety policy" means a policy that addresses:

- (A) measures designed to restrict access by minors to obscene material on the Internet;
- (B) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- (C) unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by minors on-line; and
- (D) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Section 2 amends Subchapter I, Chapter 441 of the Government Code to add Section 441.1385. Subsection (a) adds a definition for "internet safety policy" and "obscene." Subsection (b) states that a public library that provides a computer used to access the Internet is not eligible for a loan or grant under Subchapter C, Chapter 57, Utilities Code (distant learning through video, data, voice, or electronic information) unless the library adopts and implements an Internet safety policy.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003.