

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3125
By: Truitt
Human Services
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Blindness Education, Screening, and Treatment program (program) was established by the 75th Legislature to provide blindness prevention education, screening and treatment for Texans who are not covered under an adequate health benefit plan and was funded through a voluntary \$1 donation made upon renewal of drivers license or state ID. Under the current legislation, the Texas Commission for the Blind (commission) cannot apply donated funds toward federal match. C.S.H.B. 3125 would revise the current program coverage to include transition services for eligible blind Texans, which would allow the commission to use that portion of the donated money as a federal match to draw down additional federal dollars for services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

The bill amends the Human Resources Code by authorizing the Texas Commission for the Blind to provide blindness prevention education, screening and treatment for residents who are not covered under an adequate health benefit plan and to provide transition services to blind disabled individuals eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 3125 differs from the original in that it reinstates the name of the program to ensure the bill meets all necessary legal requirements. The substitute differs from the original by removing portions of the bill that deleted the name of the program. The substitute differs from the original by removing the portion of the bill that required Texas Commission for the Blind to establish a consolidated program. The substitute differs from the original by not amending portions of the Transportation Code pertaining to the additional \$1 fee charged by the Texas Department of Transportation for the issuance or renewal of a license or personal identification card.