

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 153
By: Zaffirini
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Voucher Payment Program (program) is overseen by the Voucher Payment Program Work Group which was established by Senate Bill 1586 in the 76th Legislature. The program is only used for two services, respite and personal attendant services, and these services are provided through the Community Based Alternatives Waiver Program, the Community Living Assistance and Support Services Waiver Program, the Client Managed Personal Attendant Services Program, the Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities Waiver Program, the Primary Home Care Program, and the In Home and Family Support Program administered by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. However, S.B. 1586 provides for the program to include supported employment and “other services that the Health and Human Services Commission, with assistance from the work group, determines are appropriate and applicable and may be provided with available funding.” Extending the expiration date, currently set for September 1, 2003, would allow the work group to assist with the rollout of the program. Adding the Texas Workforce Commission as a partner could help address labor issues that have arisen during the initial rollout of the program. Senate Bill 153 expands the membership of the group, changes the name of the group, and extends the expiration date of the group.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

Senate Bill 153 amends the Government Code by changing the heading of Section 531.052, Government Code to CONSUMER DIRECTED SERVICES WORK GROUP (work group) from VOUCHER PAYMENT PROGRAM WORK GROUP. The bill adds the provision that the work group is to be composed of representatives of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), appointed by the executive director of TWC (director) and representatives of any other state agency as considered necessary by the commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (commissioner), appointed by the governing body of their respective agency. The bill provides that this section will expire September 1, 2007, rather than September 1, 2003.

SB 153 requires the commissioner and the director to ensure that, not later than January 1, 2004, the composition of the work group created to assist in implementing the voucher payment program complies with the requirements of Section 531.052, Government Code, no later than January 1, 2004.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003.