

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 63

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the provision of financial assistance and related support services to certain legal immigrants.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 31.0015 to read as follows:

Sec. 31.0015. ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN LEGAL IMMIGRANTS. To the maximum extent authorized by federal law, the department shall provide financial assistance and related support services under the financial assistance program to a person who:

(1) is a qualified alien, as defined by 8 U.S.C. Sections 1641(b) and (c), as amended; and

(2) meets the eligibility requirements of the financial assistance program.

SECTION 2. Subtitle C, Title 2, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Chapter 37 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 37. STATE SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM FOR LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

Sec. 37.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "support services" means services defined by federal law that are provided to recipients as a component of the financial assistance program authorized by Chapter 31.

Sec. 37.002. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE PROGRAM; FUNDING. (a) The Health and Human Services Commission, the department, and the Texas Workforce Commission, with the

1 participation of local workforce development boards, shall jointly
2 develop and implement a state program of support services that is
3 distinct from the financial assistance program authorized by
4 Chapter 31.

5 (b) Support services may be provided under the state program
6 only to a person who:

7 (1) is a qualified alien, as defined by 8 U.S.C.
8 Sections 1641(b) and (c), as amended;

9 (2) entered the United States on or after August 22,
10 1996; and

11 (3) is not eligible for financial assistance under
12 Chapter 31 solely because the person has resided in the United
13 States for a period of less than five years after the date the
14 person entered as a qualified alien.

15 (c) Support services provided under the state program may
16 not be funded with federal money provided to the state for the
17 financial assistance program authorized by Chapter 31.

18 Sec. 37.003. RULES. (a) The Health and Human Services
19 Commission, the department, and the Texas Workforce Commission, in
20 consultation with the standing committees of the senate and house
21 of representatives having jurisdiction over health and human
22 services issues, shall adopt all rules necessary for implementation
23 of the state program, including rules regarding eligibility, work
24 requirements, work exemptions, and time limits.

25 (b) The rules must be designed to result in a state program
26 that is substantively identical to the support services component
27 of the financial assistance program authorized by Chapter 31,

1 except to the extent that programmatic differences are appropriate
2 because of the populations served by those programs and the sources
3 of funding for those programs.

4 (c) The Health and Human Services Commission, the
5 department, and the Texas Workforce Commission shall form an
6 interagency work group to develop the rules required under this
7 section. The interagency work group shall provide for
8 participation in development of the rules by:

9 (1) representatives of local workforce development
10 boards; and

11 (2) members of the standing committees of the senate
12 and house of representatives having jurisdiction over health and
13 human services issues.

14 Sec. 37.004. EXPIRATION. This chapter expires on the date
15 federal law no longer prohibits the department from providing
16 support services under the financial assistance program authorized
17 by Chapter 31 to a person described by Sections 37.002(b)(1) and (2)
18 because of the length of the period the person has resided in the
19 United States after the date the person entered as a qualified
20 alien.

21 SECTION 3. If before implementing any provision of this Act
22 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
23 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
24 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
25 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
26 waiver or authorization is granted.

27 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.