

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 952
By: Delisi
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There has been an advance practical nurse clinic in operation at the Texas Capitol for several years and it has been proven to be both convenient and cost-effective. The same benefits should accrue at advance practical nurse clinics located at other large state office complexes. This legislation will establish a pilot program to create such a clinic for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the board of trustees of the Employees Retirement System in SECTION 1 and 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

CSHB 952 amends Title 6, Subtitle B of the Government Code by adding Chapter 671, which provides for health services in state office complexes. The Employees Retirement System of Texas is required to develop and implement a pilot program in which a licensed advanced practice nurse is employed to provide on-site health services for state employees who choose to make use of the services, with the goal of reducing the cost of health care and increasing the wellness and productivity of state employees. The pilot program must provide for a licensed nurse practitioner who is either employed by the state or who is hired on a contract basis to be located at the state office complex. This nurse must be supervised by a licensed physician who is either employed by the state or acquired by contract. The program must also provide for appropriate space and equipment. The ERS is required to determine the most cost-effective way of paying for this program, directly or through reimbursement in an interagency agreement. The ERS is authorized to continue or expand the pilot program if it is found to be beneficial to the state and economically beneficial. The board of trustees is required to adopt rules as soon as possible. Within 90 days of adoption of the rules, the ERS is required to begin the pilot program at the headquarters of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. By December 31, 2006, the ERS is required to report on participation, costs, benefits, and recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and standing committees that deal with state spending or health and human services.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

CSHB 952 modifies the original by transferring authority of the pilot program from the Department of State Health Services to the Employees Retirement System of Texas. It also clarifies that employees may choose whether to make use of the services or not. The substitute allows for the nurse and supervising doctor to be acquired by contract instead of requiring that they be state employees. The ERS is required to decide the best method of paying for the program. The deadline for adopting rules for the program was changed from October 1, 2005, to as soon as possible, with 90 days after adoption set for the implementation deadline instead of January 1, 2006. The substitute also specifies the content and recipients of the report that ERS must provide on the program.