

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1970
By: Raymond
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect is required to make a report to appropriate authorities. One of the authorities to which a report can be made is the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), but current law provides that a report is to be made to DFPS if the abuse involves someone responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child. Children are often abused by persons other than those who are responsible for their care, custody, or welfare, and DFPS is a proper recipient of such reports as well. H.B. 1970 would make this needed change to existing law.

In addition, school superintendents need to be informed of the results of investigations of child abuse or neglect in order to help ensure that any necessary follow-up care and services are provided for their students. H.B. 1970 addresses this situation as well.

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

The bill amends existing law to provide that a report of suspected abuse or neglect may be made to DFPS regardless of whether or not the abuse involves someone responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and must be made to DFPS if the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect does involve someone responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child.

The bill also adds a provision that the superintendent of the child's school district is to receive a written report of the DFPS investigation of suspected abuse or neglect involving the child.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.