

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 921  
By: Delisi  
Government Reform  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The lack of useful interaction and data sharing among state agencies has become a hindrance to efficient governance and the provision of state services to Texas residents. The bill seeks to put in place an infrastructure that will allow for the sharing of information among state agencies.

### **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 the Government Code and the Health and Safety Code by directing the Texas Health Care Policy Council (council) to establish an interagency information sharing pilot program, among participating agencies, as defined by the bill. The bill also provides the presiding officer of the council with the ability to appoint workgroups as defined by the bill to assist with the pilot program. The bill specifies that the pilot program will expire on September 1, 2013.

The bill requires the council, in consultation with the Department of Information Resources (department), to develop standards for sharing information electronically among participating agencies. The standards developed by the council must require a state agency to comply with any federal or state law relating to confidentiality of the information maintained or received by the agency; ensure the protection of personally identifiable information from inappropriate release; and include strategies for sharing information and procedures for transferring information. Additionally, the bill requires a participating agency to conform to the council's common client information interchange standards whenever possible.

Likewise, the bill requires the council, in consultation with the department, to analyze and compare how state agencies with common clients manage and exchange information relating to those clients; identify opportunities to improve an individual's interaction with multiple state agencies; and emphasize the development of standards that facilitate data sharing without requiring significant custom modifications or expense to the state agency's information system.

Lastly, the department is required to publish the standards for data sharing on the department's website and to notify the presiding officer of each house of the legislature. The council is directed to publish the standards no later than September 1, 2008.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE**

The bill differs from the original bill by replacing a reference to state agency implementation of data sharing standards created under a newly created Subchapter N in Chapter 2054, Government Code, with a reference to the implementation by state agencies of data sharing standards, where applicable, created under a newly created Subchapter B within Chapter 113 of the Health and Safety Code.

The bill deletes a requirement that the Department of Information Resources (department) supply the Legislative Budget Board with a list of agencies that have not complied with data sharing standards developed under the proposed Subchapter N.

The bill replaces all references to a newly created Subchapter N, INTERAGENCY SHARING OF INFORMATION, in Chapter 2054, Government Code, with references to a newly created Subchapter B, INTERAGENCY INFORMATION SHARING PILOT PROGRAM, within Chapter 113 of the Health and Safety Code.

The bill adds a definition of "participating agency", which shall mean a state agency that provides social services, mental health services, substance abuse services, or health services.

The bill removes references to a newly-created Client Information Interchange Standards Committee and replaces them with references to the Texas Health Care Policy Council, shortened to "council". Establishes that the presiding officer of the council may appoint workgroups consisting of members of the council and representatives of participating agencies for any purpose consistent with the duties of this subchapter. Directs the council to identify other agencies with relevant expertise and related projects and authorizes the council to appoint members of these agencies to workgroups as appropriate.

The bill transfers the responsibility for developing standards, in consultation with the department, for data sharing from the department to the council. Likewise, the bill replaces the abbreviated "department" with the full name of "Department of Information Resources" in the requirement for publishing the new standards on the department's website.

The bill removes the Client Information Interchange Standards Committee from the requirement to: analyze and compare how state agencies with common clients manage and exchange information relating to those clients; identify opportunities to improve an individual's interaction with multiple state agencies; and emphasize the development of standards that facilitate data sharing without requiring significant custom modifications or expense to the state agency's information system. The bill transfers this duty to the council.

The bill makes conforming changes in the list of subsections set to expire on September 1, 2013, as well as conforming changes to specify that the council, instead of the Department of Information Resources, shall publish the standards by the September 1, 2008 deadline. Lastly, the bill makes conforming changes to the code references cited in regard to the publication requirement.