

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 139
By: Nelson
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The importance of nurses in patient care cannot be overstated. Given their key role in health care and the burdens on nursing staffs caused by the current nursing shortage, it is critical that nurses graduate with all the knowledge they need to start serving patients. Some concerns have been raised regarding the readiness of nurse graduates in handling the often chaotic situation of nursing in hospitals.

As proposed, S.B. 139 requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Board of Nurse Examiners to study the current nursing curriculum and recommend improvements in order to ensure that Texas nursing programs teach the highest quality nursing curriculum.

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

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0662 as relating to a study on improving nursing program curricula. Defines "professional nursing program" and "vocational nursing program."

Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in consultation with the Board of Nurse Examiners, to conduct a study regarding nursing program curricula improvement. Requires the study to focus on methods to improve instruction on providing safe and high-quality nursing care to patients.

Requires THECB to complete the study and distribute the report to certain parties no later than December 31, 2008. Requires the report to include detailed recommendations regarding certain methods of improvement. Provides an expiration date.

SECTION 2. Effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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