

By: Pierson

H.B. No. 3008

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a pilot program to match certain teens in foster care with adult mentors.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.1165 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.1165. MENTORSHIP PILOT PROGRAM. (a) The department shall establish a pilot program in Tarrant County, Denton County, Dallas County, and Collin County under which children in foster care who are 16 years of age or older are paired with volunteer adult mentors in order to foster relationships of support and guidance in preparation for the children's transition to adult living.

(b) Children in foster care who qualify for participation in the program may participate on a voluntary basis.

(c) An individual who volunteers as a mentor under the program is subject to state and national criminal background checks in accordance with Sections 411.087 and 411.114, Government Code.

(d) The department shall require foster parents or employees of residential child-care facilities to provide appropriate supervision over individuals who serve as mentors during their participation in the program.

(e) Chapter 2109, Government Code, applies to the program.

(f) The executive commissioner may adopt rules for the

1 administration of this section.

2 (g) The department shall report to the lieutenant governor,  
3 the speaker of the house of representatives, and the members of the  
4 legislature not later than January 1, 2009, on the activities  
5 conducted under the pilot program. The report must include the  
6 department's recommendations on improvements to the program and  
7 whether the program should be continued on a statewide basis.

8 (h) This section expires September 1, 2009.

9 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
10 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
11 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
12 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
13 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.