

1-1 By: Uresti S.B. No. 1457
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 8, 2007; March 20, 2007, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Health and Human Services;
1-4 April 2, 2007, reported adversely, with favorable Committee
1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0; April 2, 2007,
1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 1457 By: Uresti

1-8 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-9 AN ACT

1-10 relating to the establishment of a strategy for reducing child
1-11 abuse and neglect and improving child welfare.

1-12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-13 SECTION 1. In this Act, "task force" means the task force
1-14 established under this Act to establish a strategy for reducing
1-15 child abuse and neglect and improving child welfare.

1-16 SECTION 2. (a) The task force consists of 15 members
1-17 appointed as follows:

1-18 (1) five members appointed by the governor;

1-19 (2) five members appointed by the lieutenant governor;

1-20 and

1-21 (3) five members appointed by the speaker of the house
1-22 of representatives.

1-23 (b) Members of the task force must be individuals who are
1-24 actively involved in the fields of the prevention of child abuse and
1-25 neglect and child welfare. The appointment of members must reflect
1-26 the geographic diversity of the state.

1-27 (c) A member of the task force may not be appointed to, or be
1-28 an employee of, a state agency.

1-29 (d) A member of the task force is not entitled to
1-30 compensation for service on the task force but is entitled to
1-31 reimbursement for travel expenses as provided by Chapter 660,
1-32 Government Code, and the General Appropriations Act.

1-33 (e) The task force shall elect a presiding officer by a
1-34 majority vote of the membership of the task force.

1-35 (f) The task force shall meet at the call of the presiding
1-36 officer.

1-37 (g) Chapter 2110, Government Code, does not apply to the
1-38 task force.

1-39 SECTION 3. (a) The task force shall establish a strategy
1-40 for reducing child abuse and neglect and for improving child
1-41 welfare in this state. In establishing that strategy, the task
1-42 force shall:

1-43 (1) gather information concerning child safety, child
1-44 abuse and neglect, and child welfare throughout the state;

1-45 (2) review the exemptions from criminal liability
1-46 provided under the Penal Code to a mother who injures her unborn
1-47 child by using a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481,
1-48 Health and Safety Code, other than a controlled substance legally
1-49 obtained by prescription, during her pregnancy and examine the
1-50 effect that repealing the exemptions will have on reducing the
1-51 number of babies who are born addicted to a controlled substance;

1-52 (3) receive reports and testimony from individuals,
1-53 state and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other
1-54 public and private organizations;

1-55 (4) create goals for state policy that would improve
1-56 child safety, prevent child abuse and neglect, and improve child
1-57 welfare; and

1-58 (5) submit a strategic plan to accomplish those goals.

1-59 (b) The strategic plan submitted under Subsection (a) of
1-60 this section may include proposals for specific statutory changes,
1-61 the creation of new programs, and methods to foster cooperation
1-62 among state agencies and between the state and local government.

1-63 SECTION 4. (a) The task force shall consult with employees

2-1 of the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Department
2-2 of State Health Services, and the Texas Department of Criminal
2-3 Justice as necessary to accomplish the task force's
2-4 responsibilities under this Act.

2-5 (b) The task force may cooperate as necessary with any other
2-6 appropriate state agency.

2-7 SECTION 5. (a) The governor, lieutenant governor, and
2-8 speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint the members
2-9 of the task force not later than October 1, 2007.

2-10 (b) Not later than August 1, 2009, the task force shall
2-11 submit the strategic plan required by Section 3 of this Act to the
2-12 governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of
2-13 representatives.

2-14 (c) The task force is abolished and this Act expires on
2-15 September 1, 2009.

2-16 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

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