

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 315  
By: Raymond  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

American Sign Language (ASL) is the dominant language and mode of communication for the deaf community in the United States. ASL not only helps give ears and voices to the deaf members of our communities but also helps members of our communities who wish to communicate with the deaf. In Texas, although the deaf community is increasing, ASL courses are not offered in many high schools.

C.S.H.B. 315 makes authorization for a public school to offer an elective course in American Sign Language applicable only to a public high school and allows the elective high school course to be offered through teleconferencing or another electronic means.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 315 amends the Education Code to make the authorization for a public school to offer an elective course in American Sign Language applicable only to a public high school. The bill allows the elective high school course to be offered through teleconferencing or another electronic means. The bill specifies that the requirement for an enrichment curriculum to include, to the extent possible, languages other than English is subject to the provision relating to an elective course described above. The bill makes its provisions applicable beginning with the 2010-2011 school year.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 315 differs from the original by making the authorization in existing law for a public school to offer an elective course in American Sign Language applicable only to a public high school, whereas the original changes the authorization in existing law to require a public high school to offer an elective course in American Sign Language and to authorize another public school to offer such an elective course.

C.S.H.B. 315 authorizes delivery of the elective high school course through teleconferencing or another electronic means, whereas the original prohibits such manner of delivery and instead requires that it be offered through in-person instruction by a teacher in the classroom.