

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
81R4387 JSC-D

H.B. 703  
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Health & Human Services  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Over one million of Texas' seniors suffer from falls, an estimated 20 to 30 percent of which result in moderate to serious injury requiring hospitalization or placement in a nursing home. Research indicates that fall prevention education can reduce incidence of falls by 30 to 50 percent. This bill declares the week beginning on the first Sunday of each year that falls after the date of the autumnal equinox as "Fall Prevention Awareness Week" to increase fall prevention education and awareness.

H.B. 703 relates to fall prevention awareness.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 161, Human Resources Code, by adding Subchapter F, as follows:

#### **SUBCHAPTER F. FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS**

Sec. 161.151. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. Provides that the legislature finds that:

- (1) in 2008, 1.14 million older Texans were expected to sustain falls;
- (2) the risk factors associated with falling increase with age;
- (3) approximately 20 to 30 percent of older adults who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries, resulting in almost 80,000 hospitalizations annually and constituting 40 percent of all nursing home placements;
- (4) according to the Centers for Disease Control of the United States Public Health Service, the total direct cost of all fall-related injuries in 2000 for people 65 years of age and older exceed \$19 billion nationwide; and
- (5) research shows that a well-designed fall prevention program that includes risk factor assessments, a focused physical activity program, and improvement of the home environment can reduce the incidence of falls by 30 to 50 percent.

Sec. 161.152. FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK. Provides that the week that begins on the first Sunday of each year that falls after the date of the autumnal equinox is declared "Fall Prevention Awareness Week."

Sec. 161.153. FALL PREVENTION POLICY. Authorizes the Department of Aging and Disability Services to develop recommendations to:

- (1) raise public awareness about fall prevention;

- (2) educate older adults and individuals who provide care to older adults about best practices to reduce the incidence and risk of falls among older adults;
- (3) encourage state and local governments and the private sector to promote policies and programs that help reduce the incidence and risk of falls among older adults;
- (4) encourage area agencies on aging to include fall prevention education in their services;
- (5) develop a system for reporting falls to improve available information on falls; and
- (6) incorporate fall prevention guidelines into state and local planning documents that affect housing, transportation, parks, recreational facilities, and other public facilities.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.