

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1574
By: Thompson
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The term "autism spectrum disorder" (ASD) includes five different disorders: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder, Rett syndrome, Asperger syndrome, and childhood disintegrative disorder. Because ASD is a spectrum disorder, children and adults with ASD function at various levels with regards to social and communication skills and may also display different repetitive behaviors and patterns — each person's case is different.

According to the Autism Society of America, ASD is one of the fastest-growing developmental disabilities in the country. Though the cost of care is roughly \$90 million annually, the organization estimates that this cost could be reduced by two-thirds with early diagnosis and prevention.

H.B. 1574 establishes the autism spectrum disorders resource center to aid children and adults with ASD, and their families, by providing information, training, and other means of assistance to those affected by ASD.

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

H.B. 1574 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish and administer an autism spectrum disorders resource center to coordinate resources for individuals with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders and their families. The bill requires HHSC, in establishing and administering the center, to consult with the Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders and coordinate with appropriate state agencies, including each agency represented by the council. The bill requires HHSC to design the center to collect and distribute information and research regarding autism and other pervasive developmental disorders; conduct training and development activities for persons who may interact with an individual with autism or another pervasive developmental disorder in the course of their employment, including school, medical, or law enforcement personnel; coordinate with local entities that provide services to an individual with autism or another pervasive developmental disorder; and provide support for families affected by autism and other pervasive developmental disorders.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.