

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1978  
By: Farias  
Human Services  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Texas has the third-highest teen birth rate in the nation, with 63 births for every 1,000 female teens. This birth rate is nearly 50 percent higher than the national rate. At 24 percent, Texas has the highest percentage of repeat teen births in the nation. At this time, the state funds abstinence education programs in schools and communities. However, there is state funding available to support evidence-based youth development programs other than programs that deal with juvenile delinquency. Teen Outreach Program is such a program and should be implemented in Texas.

C.S.H.B. 1978 requires the Department of Family and Protective Services to establish an evidence-based youth development competitive grant pilot program to award grants for the implementation, expansion, and operation of evidence-based youth development programs designed to provide information and guidance for not more than a total of 75 adolescents in making healthy and beneficial life choices. The bill requires the pilot program to be located in Bexar County and to serve regions with large numbers of at-risk youth.

### **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. 1978 requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to establish an evidence-based youth development competitive grant pilot program to award grants for the implementation, expansion, and operation of evidence-based youth development programs designed to provide information and guidance for not more than a total of 75 adolescents in making healthy and beneficial life choices. The bill requires the pilot program to be located in Bexar County and to serve regions that are located in zip codes in which the school-age birth rate is at least three times the national rate and that are served by one or more school districts in which at least 90 percent of the student population is economically disadvantaged and the annual dropout rate for grades seven through twelve is greater than five percent.

C.S.H.B. 1978 establishes requirements for a program funded through a grant awarded under the bill's provisions relating to adolescents who are to be targeted by the program, appropriate curriculum, a community service component, minimum activity sessions or group discussions each week, and developmental topics to be covered. The bill requires a program that receives a grant to use grant funding to operate during a nine-month period beginning not earlier than August 1, 2010, and not later than September 30, 2010.

C.S.H.B. 1978 establishes the application requirements and procedures for a public or private entity, including a county, municipality, or other political subdivision, to apply for a program grant. The bill prescribes considerations related to an applicant that DFPS is required to consider in determining whether to award a grant. The bill requires the commissioner of DFPS to adopt standards for an evidence-based youth development program awarded a grant.

C.S.H.B. 1978 provides that grant funds may be used only to cover costs related to implementing, expanding, or operating an evidence-based youth development program during a nine-month period beginning not earlier than August 1, 2010, and not later than September 30, 2010, including costs related to administering the program, training and managing staff, paying staff salaries and expenses, and paying for program facilities and equipment. The bill requires the commissioner of DFPS to adopt performance indicators designed to measure a grant recipient's performance with respect to the commissioner's adopted program standards and requires DFPS to use such performance indicators to monitor and evaluate the performance of each grant recipient. The bill requires DFPS to submit a report, not later than November 1, 2011, to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and the House Human Services Committee or their successors, regarding the performance of each grant recipient with respect to providing certain evidence-based youth development program services. The bill requires each grant recipient, on request, to timely collect and provide data and information required by DFPS to monitor and evaluate the recipient or prepare the report.

C.S.H.B. 1978 authorizes DFPS to actively seek and apply for any available federal funds or grants from any source to assist in financing the competitive grant pilot program and authorizes DFPS to use appropriated funds and accept gifts, donations, and grants of money from the federal government, local governments, private corporations, or other persons to assist in financing the program.

C.S.H.B. 1978 defines the terms "adolescent" and "department." The bill provides that its provisions expire December 31, 2011.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2009.

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

C.S.H.B. 1978 differs from the original by making its provisions a general enactment, whereas the original amends the Government Code. The substitute adds a provision not included in the original defining "department." The substitute differs from the original by requiring the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), rather than the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), to establish and administer the evidence-based youth development competitive grant pilot program. The substitute clarifies that a program funded through a grant awarded under the bill's provisions must target adolescents who are students at risk of dropping out of school as defined by the Education Code, rather than adolescents who are at risk of dropping out of school as in the original.

C.S.H.B. 1978 differs from the original by requiring an evidence-based youth development program that receives a grant to use grant funding to operate during a nine-month period beginning not earlier than August 1, 2010, and not later than September 30, 2010, whereas the original requires an evidence-based youth development program to operate for not less than nine months or an academic school year. The substitute omits provisions included in the original requiring HHSC to consider the demonstrated need for an evidence-based youth program in the community in which the applicant proposes to operate or expand the program, as determined by certain criteria, in determining whether to award a grant for an evidence-based youth program.

C.S.H.B. 1978 requires the commissioner of DFPS, rather than the executive commissioner of HHSC as in the original, to adopt standards for an evidence-based youth development program awarded a grant and to adopt performance indicators designed to measure a grant recipient's performance with respect to the adopted standards.

C.S.H.B. 1978 differs from the original by requiring DFPS to submit the report regarding the performance of each grant recipient not later than November 1, 2011, whereas the original requires HHSC to submit the report not later than December 1, 2010. The substitute differs from the original by making its provisions expire December 31, 2011, whereas the original makes its provisions expire September 1, 2011. The substitute omits provisions included in the original requiring HHSC to apply for any available funds or grants to assist in financing the evidence-based youth development competitive grant pilot program as soon as practicable after the bill takes effect and requiring HHSC to establish and implement the evidence-based youth development competitive grant pilot program not later than December 1, 2009.