

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1054
By: Uresti
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In January of 2005, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) closed Kerrville State Hospital to civil commitments, leaving a void in the local community for individuals requiring inpatient psychiatric hospitalization to stabilize their symptoms. As a temporary measure to fill the void, DSHS authorized reopening 16 beds at the hospital for civil commitments. During this interim period, Hill Country Community Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center (Hill Country Community MHMR), DSHS, and Representative Harvey Hilderbran have been working cooperatively to develop plans to open a crisis stabilization unit operated by Hill Country Community MHMR in a vacant building on the grounds of the hospital.

The project is a joint effort of the state, county, and private foundations. H.B. 654, authored by Representative Harvey Hilderbran, was enacted by the 80th Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, and provided for a pilot program through August 2009, whereby Hill Country Community MHMR operates a 16-bed crisis stabilization unit on the grounds of the hospital. Hill Country Community MHMR is recognized as the local mental health authority for a 19-county service area. As such, Hill Country Community MHMR is responsible for evaluating individuals prior to their commitment for inpatient psychiatric services. Hill Country Community MHMR will utilize this evaluation to determine whether individuals are suitable for receiving services within the crisis stabilization unit.

S.B. 1054 converts the Hill Country local mental health authority crisis stabilization unit pilot project into a permanent crisis stabilization unit on the grounds of the Kerrville State Hospital and requires DSHS to contract with the local mental health authority serving the Hill Country area, including Kerr County, to operate the unit.

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

S.B. 1054 amends the Health and Safety Code to convert the Hill Country local mental health authority crisis stabilization unit pilot project into a permanent crisis stabilization unit on the grounds of the Kerrville State Hospital. The bill requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to contract with the local mental health authority serving the Hill Country area, including Kerr County, to operate the unit. The bill requires DSHS to include provisions in the contract requiring the local mental health authority to ensure that the crisis stabilization unit provides short-term residential treatment, including medical and nursing services, designed to reduce a patient's acute symptoms of mental illness and prevent a patient's admission to an inpatient mental health facility.

S.B. 1054 makes conforming changes relating to contracts between the local mental health authority and Kerrville State Hospital and the repeal of reporting requirements for the pilot

project and the project's expiration. The bill provides that the requirement that DSHS reduce the number of beds DSHS operates by 16 refers to the reduction in the number of beds DSHS operates in the state hospital system. The bill establishes that it does not make an appropriation and that a provision that creates a new governmental program, creates a new entitlement, or imposes a new duty on a governmental entity is not mandatory during a fiscal period for which the legislature has not made a specific appropriation to implement the provision.

S.B. 1054 repeals Sections 551.009(g) and (h), Health and Safety Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect August 31, 2009.