

AN ACT

relating to fall prevention awareness.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 161, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Subchapter F to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER F. FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS

Sec. 161.151. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. 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 exceeded \$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.

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

5       Sec. 161.153. FALL PREVENTION POLICY. The department may  
6 develop recommendations to:

7           (1) raise public awareness about fall prevention;

8           (2) educate older adults and individuals who provide  
9 care to older adults about best practices to reduce the incidence  
10 and risk of falls among older adults;

11           (3) encourage state and local governments and the  
12 private sector to promote policies and programs that help reduce  
13 the incidence and risk of falls among older adults;

14           (4) encourage area agencies on aging to include fall  
15 prevention education in their services;

16           (5) develop a system for reporting falls to improve  
17 available information on falls; and

18           (6) incorporate fall prevention guidelines into state  
19 and local planning documents that affect housing, transportation,  
20 parks, recreational facilities, and other public facilities.

21       SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 703 was passed by the House on April 2, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 145, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 703 was passed by the Senate on May 12, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Governor