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H.B. No. 1574

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to services for persons with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders and their families.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 114, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 114.013 to read as follows:

Sec. 114.013. AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS RESOURCE CENTER.

(a) The Health and Human Services Commission shall establish and administer an autism spectrum disorders resource center to coordinate resources for individuals with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders and their families. In establishing and administering the center, the Health and Human Services Commission shall consult with the council and coordinate with appropriate state agencies, including each agency represented on the council.

(b) The Health and Human Services Commission shall design the center to:

(1) collect and distribute information and research regarding autism and other pervasive developmental disorders;

(2) 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;

(3) coordinate with local entities that provide

1 services to an individual with autism or another pervasive
2 developmental disorder; and

3 (4) provide support for families affected by autism
4 and other pervasive developmental disorders.

5 SECTION 2. (a) The executive commissioner of the Health
6 and Human Services Commission shall conduct a study to determine
7 the costs and benefits to this state of initiating a pilot program
8 to provide services to adult persons with autism and other related
9 disabilities with similar support needs.

10 (b) The study will determine the costs and benefits of a
11 pilot program based on a program designed to:

12 (1) encourage sustainable employment and community
13 integration through specialized supports coordination, case
14 management, vocational assessment, training, and support to
15 increase job skills and competitive employment opportunities;

16 (2) develop meaningful community-based activities for
17 persons for whom competitive employment is not a goal;

18 (3) promote continued individual development and
19 avoid regression;

20 (4) promote self-determination and independence;

21 (5) coordinate services and behavioral supports
22 across all areas of need; and

23 (6) allow for flexible funding and for a flexible
24 array of services to meet individual needs.

25 (c) In conducting the study, the executive commissioner of
26 the Health and Human Services Commission shall:

27 (1) define and describe a pilot program with a

1 seamless system of supports to provide:

2 (A) options for independent living, if
3 appropriate;

4 (B) community-based housing, if needed; and

5 (C) individualized supports, including:

6 (i) prevocational training;

7 (ii) employment training; and

8 (iii) leisure and recreational activities;

9 (2) research and analyze best practices and programs
10 from other states that may serve as pilot program models;

11 (3) consult with and solicit feedback from key
12 stakeholders, including advocacy organizations, potential service
13 recipients, and parents;

14 (4) address the barriers that may prevent adults with
15 autism or other related disabilities with similar support needs
16 from living in their local community including:

17 (A) housing needs and living arrangements;

18 (B) behavioral services;

19 (C) social and communication services and
20 supports;

21 (D) transportation issues; and

22 (E) health and medical care;

23 (5) identify the existence and cause of service gaps
24 in this state;

25 (6) develop recommendations and determine costs
26 associated with eliminating service gaps;

27 (7) identify the potential benefit to persons who

1 would receive services from the pilot program; and

2 (8) identify potential federal sources of funding for
3 a pilot program.

4 (d) Not later than September 1, 2010, the executive
5 commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall
6 submit a report of the findings and conclusions of the study to the
7 governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of
8 representatives, and the presiding officers of the standing
9 committees of the senate and house of representatives with primary
10 jurisdiction over the provision of services to persons with
11 disabilities.

12 (e) The report required under Subsection (d) of this section
13 must include:

14 (1) a recommendation for the structure of a pilot
15 program;

16 (2) a recommendation on the choice of an appropriate
17 agency to design and administer a pilot program;

18 (3) an estimation of the number of persons who may
19 benefit from a pilot program if a program similar to the pilot
20 program were instituted statewide;

21 (4) an estimation of the potential costs of the pilot
22 program and whether the pilot program may lead to savings;

23 (5) a method of determining which persons would be
24 eligible to participate in the pilot program; and

25 (6) which Medicaid waiver programs are appropriate to
26 the pilot program and whether new Medicaid waiver programs may be
27 required.

1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.