

By: Naishtat

H.B. No. 3259

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Council on Children and Families.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter T to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER T. COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Sec. 531.801. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "council" means the Council on Children and Families.

Sec. 531.802. COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. (a) The Council on Children and Families is established to coordinate the state's health, education, and human services systems to ensure that all children and families have access to needed services.

(b) Subject to Subsection (c), the council is composed of the following:

(1) the executive commissioner;

(2) the commissioner of state health services;

(3) the commissioner of the Department of Family and Protective Services;

(4) the commissioner of aging and disability services;

(5) the commissioner of assistive and rehabilitative services;

(6) the commissioner of education;

(7) the executive director of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission;

1 (8) the executive commissioner of the Texas Youth
2 Commission; and

3 (9) the executive director of the Texas Workforce
4 Commission.

5 (c) An individual listed in Subsection (b) may designate
6 another individual as having authority to act on behalf of the
7 individual at council meetings and with respect to council
8 functions.

9 (d) The members of the council shall annually elect one
10 member to serve as the presiding officer.

11 (e) The council is administratively attached to the
12 commission but is independent of direction by the commission or the
13 executive commissioner. The commission, through the commission's
14 Office of Program Coordination for Children and Youth, shall
15 provide administrative support and resources to the council as
16 necessary to enable the council to perform its duties.

17 (f) The agencies represented on the council shall provide
18 periodic staff support of specialists as needed to the council.

19 (g) The council is not subject to Chapter 2110.

20 Sec. 531.803. DUTIES. (a) The council shall:

21 (1) develop an interagency legislative appropriations
22 request regarding health, education, and human services provided to
23 children and their families;

24 (2) investigate opportunities to increase flexible
25 funding for health, education, and human services provided to
26 children and their families;

27 (3) identify methods to remove barriers to local

1 coordination of health, education, and human services provided to
2 children and their families;

3 (4) identify methods to ensure that all children and
4 youth receive appropriate assessment, diagnoses, and intervention
5 services;

6 (5) develop methods to prevent unnecessary parental
7 relinquishment of custody of children;

8 (6) prioritize assisting children in family settings
9 rather than institutional settings; and

10 (7) make recommendations about family involvement in
11 the provision and planning of health, education, and human services
12 for a child, including family partner and liaison models.

13 Sec. 531.804. REPORT BY COUNCIL ON CHILD WELFARE. Not later
14 than December 1, 2010, the council shall submit a report to the
15 governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of
16 representatives, and members of the legislature that contains the
17 requests, plans, and recommendations of the council, including
18 recommendations of any legislation that is needed to further
19 develop and maintain a statewide system of quality health,
20 education, and human services for children and families.

21 Sec. 531.805. SUNSET PROVISION. The Council on Children
22 and Families is subject to Chapter 325 (Texas Sunset Act). Unless
23 continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the council is
24 abolished and this subchapter expires September 1, 2015.

25 SECTION 2. The Council on Children and Families established
26 by Section 531.802, Government Code, as added by this Act, shall
27 convene its initial meeting not later than October 1, 2009.

1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.