

By: Strama, et al.

H.B. No. 4328

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Interagency Literacy Council for the study, promotion, and enhancement of literacy in this state.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle B, Title 4, Labor Code, is amended by adding Chapter 312 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 312. INTERAGENCY LITERACY COUNCIL

Sec. 312.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "council" means the Interagency Literacy Council established under this chapter.

Sec. 312.002. APPLICATION OF SUNSET ACT. The Interagency Literacy Council is subject to Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the council is abolished and this chapter expires September 1, 2019.

Sec. 312.003. ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION. (a) The commission shall establish the Interagency Literacy Council. The council is composed of nine members as follows:

(1) a representative of the commission, appointed by the executive director;

(2) a representative of the Texas Education Agency, appointed by the commissioner of education;

(3) a representative of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, appointed by the commissioner of higher

1 education; and

2 (4) six public members who are leaders of the business  
3 or nonprofit community engaged in literacy promotion efforts,  
4 appointed by the executive director of the commission.

5 (b) The representative appointed under Subsection (a)(1)  
6 shall serve as the presiding officer of the council.

7 Sec. 312.004. COMMISSION DUTIES. The commission shall  
8 provide staff and resources as necessary for the operation of the  
9 council.

10 Sec. 312.005. TERMS; VACANCY. (a) Members of the council  
11 serve two-year terms, with the terms expiring February 1 of each  
12 odd-numbered year.

13 (b) A member may be reappointed.

14 (c) A vacancy on the council shall be filled for the  
15 remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as provided by  
16 Section 312.003(a).

17 Sec. 312.006. MEETINGS. (a) The council shall meet in  
18 person at least three times each year and may hold meetings by  
19 conference call if necessary. The council shall invite  
20 stakeholders to participate in at least one council meeting each  
21 year and provide an opportunity for submission of oral or written  
22 testimony.

23 (b) Section 551.125, Government Code, applies to a meeting  
24 held by conference call under this section, except that Section  
25 551.125(b), Government Code, does not apply.

26 Sec. 312.007. COMPENSATION; REIMBURSEMENT. (a) A member  
27 of the council may not receive compensation for service on the

1 council.

2 (b) A public member may be reimbursed for the member's  
3 actual and necessary expenses for meals, lodging, transportation,  
4 and incidental expenses incurred while performing council  
5 business, subject to any applicable limitation on reimbursement  
6 prescribed by the General Appropriations Act.

7 Sec. 312.008. COUNCIL POWERS AND DUTIES. The council  
8 shall:

9 (1) study current research to assess the adult  
10 literacy needs in this state, including literacy needs relating to  
11 business and finance, workforce and technology, civics, and health  
12 and wellness;

13 (2) consult with key stakeholders to identify:  
14 (A) barriers to improving literacy; and  
15 (B) evidence-based best practices for improving  
16 literacy;

17 (3) review the status of the programs and services  
18 administered by each agency or entity represented on the council  
19 that promote literacy in an effort to coordinate efforts, align  
20 services, reduce redundancies, implement best practices, integrate  
21 support services, and improve accountability;

22 (4) build existing funding streams and identify  
23 additional state and federal funding sources available for the  
24 promotion of literacy in this state; and

25 (5) raise literacy awareness and engage community  
26 leaders in creative solution building for improving literacy in  
27 this state.

1       Sec. 312.009. STATEWIDE LITERACY PLAN; REPORT. (a) The  
2 council shall develop a comprehensive statewide action plan for the  
3 improvement of literacy in this state, including a recommended  
4 timeline for implementation.

5       (b) The council shall submit to both houses of the  
6 legislature, the governor, and the Texas Workforce Investment  
7 Council on or before November 1 of each even-numbered year a written  
8 report on:

9             (1) the development of the council's statewide action  
10 plan;

11             (2) the actions taken in furtherance of the plan;

12             (3) the areas that need improvement in implementing  
13 the plan;

14             (4) any change to the plan; and

15             (5) the programs and services that address literacy  
16 needs in this state.

17       Sec. 312.010. GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. The commission  
18 may accept for the council a gift, grant, or donation from any  
19 source to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

20       Sec. 312.011. RULES. The commission may adopt rules  
21 necessary to implement this chapter.

22       SECTION 2. (a) The Interagency Literacy Council shall  
23 submit the initial report required under Section 312.009(b), Labor  
24 Code, as added by this Act, not later than November 1, 2012.

25       (b) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this  
26 Act, the designated appointing officials shall appoint the members  
27 to the Interagency Literacy Council established under Chapter 312,

1 Labor Code, as added by this Act.

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