

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1784  
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Human Services  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Close to a decade ago, the state of Washington began using a United States Department of Health and Human Services national database called the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) for a pilot program aimed at locating veterans who were on the state's Medicaid system but were unknowingly eligible for benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense. If the federal benefits were of better quality than the ones provided by the state, the veteran could relinquish the Medicaid benefits and enroll in the federal system. The pilot program eventually grew into a statewide program that reportedly saved the state's Medicaid program approximately \$18 million in just seven years by enrolling roughly 5,600 veterans and their families in federal benefit programs.

The Legislative Budget Board recently recommended the use of the PARIS system as a way to save state funds by identifying veterans who are in the state Medicaid system but are also entitled to federal benefits. C.S.H.B. 1784 seeks to implement this recommendation by authorizing a memorandum of understanding among certain state agencies for the purposes of coordinating and collecting data from PARIS to identify new strategies for state agencies to use that data in ways that generate fiscal savings for the state and maximize the availability of and access to benefits for veterans.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 1784 amends the Government Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), the Texas Veterans Commission, the Veterans' Land Board, and the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), not later than December 1, 2011, to enter into a memorandum of understanding for the purposes of coordinating and collecting information about the use and analysis among state agencies of data received from the Public Assistance Reporting Information System operated by the Administration for Children and Families of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and developing new strategies for state agencies to use system data in ways that generate fiscal savings for the state and maximize the availability of and access to benefits for veterans. The bill requires HHSC, the Texas Veteran's Commission, and DADS to coordinate to assist veterans in maximizing the benefits available to each veteran by using the system and authorizes HHSC and the Texas Veterans Commission together to determine the geographic scope of those efforts.

C.S.H.B. 1784 adds a temporary provision, set to expire September 1, 2013, to require HHSC, the Texas Veterans Commission, the Veterans' Land Board, and DADS, not later than October 1, 2012, to collectively submit to the governor and the Legislative Budget Board a report describing the frequency and success with which state agencies have used the system, the costs to the state that were avoided as a result of state agencies' use of the system, and

recommendations for future use of the system by state agencies. The bill defines "system."

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 1784, in a provision establishing the purposes for which certain agencies are required to enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the Public Assistance Reporting Information System, includes a condition not contained in the original that the new strategies developed under the memorandum provide for the use of system data by state agencies in ways that maximize the availability of and access to benefits for veterans.

C.S.H.B. 1784 contains provisions not included in the original requiring the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) to coordinate to assist veterans in maximizing the benefits available to each veteran by using the system and authorizing HHSC and the Texas Veterans Commission together to determine the geographic scope of those efforts.

C.S.H.B. 1784 differs from the original by setting an October 1, 2012, deadline for HHSC, the Texas Veterans Commission, the Veterans' Land Board, and DADS to collectively submit a report relating to the use of the system by state agencies to the governor and the Legislative Budget Board, whereas the original sets a deadline of October 15, 2012. The substitute differs from the original by making its provisions relating to that reporting requirement expire September 1, 2013, whereas the original sets an expiration date of September 2, 2013. The substitute differs from the original in nonsubstantive ways.