

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 480
By: Alvarado
State Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Experts point out that multiple studies have found that parental involvement can help enhance a child's early learning experience. Research has shown that the earlier a parent is involved in the child's education, the better the child performs in school. The child is more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, develop social skills, and graduate from high school.

Nevertheless, working parents often have to juggle multiple responsibilities that can hinder their ability to be more engaged in their child's educational activities. Because the majority of a child's school events occur during a working parent's work hours, many of these parents are unable to attend. The experts contend that allowing employees to use accrued leave to participate in their child's educational activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, tutoring, volunteer programs, and field trips would increase parental involvement in the life of their child. C.S.H.B. 480 seeks to promote parental involvement by authorizing the use of accrued sick leave for state employees for that purpose.

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. 480 amends the Government Code to entitle a state employee who is a parent of a child who is a student attending a grade from prekindergarten through 12th grade to use up to eight hours of sick leave each fiscal year for the purpose of attending school-sponsored activities of the employee's child, rather than only for the purpose of attending parent-teacher conferences. The bill requires the employee to give reasonable advance notice of the employee's intention to use the sick leave in this manner.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 480 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED	HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 661,	SECTION 1. The heading to Section

Government Code, is amended by adding Section 661.923 to read as follows:
Sec. 661.923. LEAVE TO ATTEND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Educational activity" means a school-sponsored activity, including a parent-teacher conference, tutoring, a volunteer program, a field trip, a classroom program, a school committee meeting, an academic competition, and an athletic, music, or theater program.

(2) "Parent" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.101, Family Code.

(b) This section applies to an employee who is a parent of a child who is a student attending a grade from prekindergarten through 12th grade.

(c) In addition to leave under Section 661.206, a state employee is entitled to a leave of absence not to exceed eight hours each fiscal year without a deduction in salary for the purpose of attending educational activities of the employee's child.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

661.206, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 661.206. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES ~~[PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE]~~: USE OF SICK LEAVE.

SECTION 2. Sections 661.206(b), (c), and (d), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(d) In this section:

(1) "Educational activity" means a school-sponsored activity, including a parent-teacher conference, tutoring, a volunteer program, a field trip, a classroom program, a school committee meeting, an academic competition, and an athletic, music, or theater program.

(2) "Employee" has the meaning assigned by Section 661.001.

(3) [(2)] "Parent" means a person standing in parental relation.

(b) An employee may use up to eight hours of sick leave each fiscal year to attend educational activities of [parent-teacher conference sessions for] the employee's children.

(c) An employee shall give reasonable advance notice of the employee's intention to use the sick leave to attend an educational activity [a parent-teacher conference].

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.