

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1023
By: Burkett
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been reported that one in four adults in the United States experiences a diagnosable mental illness in a given year. When appropriate treatment and services are available, people living with mental health conditions can recover and live healthy, productive lives. Unfortunately, interested parties contend, Texas is experiencing a mental health workforce shortage crisis. According to industry experts, a majority of Texas counties have been designated by the federal government as Health Professional Shortage Areas for mental health, with many of those shortage areas identified as not having a single psychiatrist. H.B. 1023 seeks to create a task force to study the mental health workforce shortage in the state of Texas.

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

H.B. 1023 requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or a health and human services agency designated by HHSC, not later than October 1, 2013, to establish a task force to investigate and make recommendations regarding mental health workforce shortages in Texas. The bill requires the task force to investigate the existence, severity, and causes of mental health workforce shortages. The bill requires the investigation to specifically identify the types of providers for which shortages exist, including types such as licensed professionals, certified peer specialists, and direct care staff; the types of licensed professionals, specialists, or staff for which shortages exist; the locations or regions in Texas in which shortages exist and in which extraordinary shortages exist; the effect the shortages have on the ability of persons with mental illness to receive services in Texas and in identified shortage areas; and the economic and societal effect of the shortages.

H.B. 1023 requires HHSC, or the health and human services agency designated by HHSC, not later than December 1, 2014, to submit a report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the appropriate standing committees of the legislature that includes the results of the task force's investigation and recommended means to alleviate identified mental health workforce shortages.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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