

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2455  
By: Burkett  
Homeland Security & Public Safety  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties note that numerous agencies at the state and county level differ in how the agencies report family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. The parties contend that this leads to data that does not accurately reflect the cases of violence in specific counties and creates difficulty in developing best practices to protect Texas families and victims. C.S.H.B. 2455 seeks to provide for an accurate and uniform system of gathering and reporting data to efficiently deploy funding, training, and safety resources to aid affected families and victims.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **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. 2455 amends the Government Code to establish a task force to promote uniformity in the collection and reporting of information relating to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. The bill requires the task force to solicit and receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations and to develop policy recommendations and best practices guidelines for the uniform collection and reporting of information relating to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. The bill requires the task force, in developing the policy recommendations and best practices guidelines, to examine best practices regarding uniform data collection and reporting and any studies or reports the task force considers relevant. The bill requires the task force, not later than September 1, 2016, to prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the appropriate standing committees of the legislature a report that includes a description of the activities of the task force, the findings and recommendations of the task force, and any other matter the task force considers appropriate.

C.S.H.B. 2455 sets out the composition of the task force, provides for the appointment of its members and presiding officer and vacancies in membership, and requires the members of the task force to be appointed as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date. The bill requires the task force to meet at the call of the presiding officer and establishes that members of the task force serve without compensation or reimbursement for expenses. The bill requires the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System to provide reasonably necessary administrative and technical support for the activities of the task force and to seek the assistance

of the task force before the office makes any recommendation as a result of the work done by the task force. The bill's provisions expire and the task force is abolished on September 1, 2017.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 2455 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

**INTRODUCED**

SECTION 1. Chapter 72, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter F to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER F. TASK FORCE TO PROMOTE UNIFORMITY IN COLLECTION AND REPORTING OF INFORMATION ON FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, STALKING, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Sec. 72.101. DEFINITIONS.

Sec. 72.102. TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP.

Sec. 72.103. MEETINGS; COMPENSATION.

Sec. 72.104. DUTIES. (a) The task force shall:

- (1) solicit and receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations, including:
  - (A) survivors of family violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking;
  - (B) law enforcement officials whose duties include submitting information to the Texas Crime Information Center;
  - (C) individuals with technical expertise in and familiarity with the programming and maintenance of the database maintained by the Texas Crime Information Center;
  - (D) individuals with technical expertise in and familiarity with the office's database on family violence; and
  - (E) individuals with expertise in issues related to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; and

**HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE**

SECTION 1. Chapter 72, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter F to read as follows:

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  - (B) law enforcement officials whose duties include submitting information to the Texas Crime Information Center;
  - (C) individuals with technical expertise in and familiarity with the programming and maintenance of the database maintained by the Texas Crime Information Center;
  - (D) individuals with technical expertise in and familiarity with the office's database on family violence; and
  - (E) individuals with expertise in issues related to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; and

(2) develop policy recommendations and best practices guidelines for the uniform collection and reporting of information relating to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking.

(b) In developing policy recommendations and best practices guidelines under Subsection (a)(2), the task force shall examine:

(1) the findings and recommendations of the "Best Practices for Lawyers Representing Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Trafficking in the State of Texas" report commissioned by the State Bar of Texas Legal Services Support Division's Family Law Task Force;

(2) best practices regarding uniform data collection and reporting; and

(3) any other studies and reports that the task force considers relevant.

Sec. 72.105. REPORT.

Sec. 72.106. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.

Sec. 72.107. ASSISTANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS.

Sec. 72.108. EXPIRATION DATE.

SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the appropriate persons shall appoint the members of the task force created by Subchapter F, Chapter 72, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. 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, 2015.

(2) develop policy recommendations and best practices guidelines for the uniform collection and reporting of information relating to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking.

(b) In developing policy recommendations and best practices guidelines under Subsection (a)(2), the task force shall examine

best practices regarding uniform data collection and reporting and any studies or reports that the task force considers relevant.

Sec. 72.105. REPORT.

Sec. 72.106. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.

Sec. 72.107. ASSISTANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS.

Sec. 72.108. EXPIRATION DATE.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.