

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 125
By: West
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Because a stable first placement is critical to the success of a child's time spent in the conservatorship of the state, interested parties assert that a thorough assessment of the needs of a child is imperative to determining appropriate mental health treatment and placement within the foster system. The parties contend that accurately assessing a child's needs as the child enters the state's care will improve ultimate outcomes for the child and minimize the expenditure of state resources on unnecessary testing and multiple placements. S.B. 125 seeks to provide for such assessment.

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

S.B. 125 amends the Family Code to require a child to receive a developmentally appropriate comprehensive assessment not later than the 45th day after the date the child enters the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). The bill requires the assessment to include a screening for trauma and interviews with individuals who have knowledge of the child's needs. The bill requires DFPS to develop guidelines regarding the contents of an assessment report.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.