

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 1559

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to an interagency plan to promote competitive and integrated employment for persons with disabilities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 121, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 121.012 to read as follows:

Sec. 121.012. INTERAGENCY PLAN FOR COMPETITIVE AND INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. (a) The comptroller, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Health and Human Services Commission, in consultation with the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities, shall work together to develop and implement an interagency plan designed to transition persons with disabilities out of environments in which persons with disabilities are segregated and receive wages that are less than minimum wage and into environments in which persons with disabilities receive competitive wages in integrated employment settings.

(b) Notwithstanding any other law, the plan established under this section must:

(1) establish a timeline as follows:

(A) not later than September 1, 2016:

(i) the Texas Education Agency shall adopt a plan to prohibit the future use of state funds for services provided by a local education agency in a environments in which

1 persons with disabilities are segregated and receive wages that are  
2 less than minimum wage; and

3 (ii) the Comptroller shall adopt a plan to  
4 use revenue from the set-aside purchasing program administered by  
5 the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities to  
6 convert environments in which persons with disabilities are  
7 segregated and receive wages that are less than minimum wage to  
8 individualized and community-based employment opportunities  
9 offering at least minimum wage;

10 (B) not later than September 1, 2017:

11 (i) each state agency shall ensure that all  
12 agency employees, including contract employees under set-aside  
13 contracts for persons with disabilities, receive minimum wage; and

14 (ii) the comptroller shall develop and  
15 implement policies that identify and remove barriers for state  
16 agencies to hire and retain persons with disabilities in integrated  
17 work environments at competitive wages; and

18 (C) not later than September 1, 2022, the Health  
19 and Human Services Commission shall adopt a plan to prohibit the use  
20 of state funds for programs offered in environments in which  
21 persons with disabilities are segregated and receive wages that are  
22 less than minimum wages;

23 (2) require the Department of Assistive and  
24 Rehabilitative Services to conduct outreach to persons with  
25 disabilities in sheltered workshops to determine the services,  
26 reasonable accommodations, or assistive technology needed to  
27 increase the marketable job skills, productivity, and work options

1 for persons with disabilities;

2 (3) require the Texas Education Agency to implement a  
3 plan that promotes community-based work skills, supports, and  
4 employment options to students with disabilities who are at least  
5 14 years of age;

6 (4) establish financial assistance and incentives for  
7 employers that convert settings in which persons with disabilities  
8 are segregated and receive wages that are less than minimum wage  
9 into supported or integrated employment opportunities offering  
10 competitive wages; and

11 (5) require state agencies participating in the  
12 implementation of the plan to collect data in a manner that provides  
13 information that is useful in determining how to sustain, expand,  
14 and improve employment opportunities supported by the plan.

15 SECTION 2. Not later than January 1, 2016, the agencies  
16 described by Section 121.012, Human Resources Code, as added by  
17 this Act, shall develop the interagency plan required by that  
18 section.

19 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote  
20 of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided  
21 by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does  
22 not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes  
23 effect September 1, 2015.