

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1608
By: Minjarez
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note the challenges young people in the job market face with regard to acquiring relevant experience and assert that those challenges are especially difficult for underprivileged young people who lack the support and stability of a traditional family setting. H.B. 1608 seeks to help foster children face these challenges by creating a summer internship pilot program that provides foster children with the opportunity to develop marketable job skills and obtain professional work experience through a summer internship with a participating business, nonprofit organization, or governmental entity.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1608 amends the Family Code to require the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to establish, not later than January 1, 2018, a summer internship pilot program that provides foster children with the opportunity to develop marketable job skills and obtain professional work experience through a summer internship with a participating business, nonprofit organization, or governmental entity. The bill authorizes DFPS to collaborate with other state agencies, as appropriate, to establish the pilot program and authorizes the implementation of the pilot program in more than one DFPS region. The bill authorizes DFPS to enter into an agreement with one or more entities to allow the entity to award internships to children who participate in the pilot program and authorizes internships provided under the pilot program to be paid or unpaid. The bill requires DFPS, not later than April 1 of each year, to select foster children or former foster children who are 15 years of age or older to participate in the pilot program and requires each child participating in the pilot program to enter into an agreement with the organization awarding the internship and DFPS relating to the terms of the child's internship. The bill requires DFPS to complete an evaluation of the pilot program not later than the second anniversary of the date the program begins.

H.B. 1608 requires DFPS to submit a report on the evaluation of the pilot program to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives that includes the number of children who participated in the pilot program, the location and type of internships provided under the pilot program, and details of DFPS efforts to recruit eligible children to participate in the pilot program. The bill authorizes the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions and

sets the bill's provisions to expire September 1, 2021.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2017.