

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1720
By: Phillips
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, some public school districts are prohibiting nurses and teachers from providing notice of an incident of lice in a classroom to parents of children other than those with lice. The parties are concerned that such prohibitions allow for the parasites to spread because parents do not know to check their child for lice. H.B. 1720 seeks to prevent the spread and reoccurrence of lice by requiring certain parental notice regarding an incident of lice in a public elementary school.

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 commissioner of education in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1720 amends the Education Code to require a school administrator or nurse of a public elementary school who determines or otherwise becomes aware that a child enrolled in the school has lice to provide written or electronic notice of that fact to the parent of the child with lice as soon as practicable but not later than 48 hours after the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact and the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice not later than the fifth school day after the date on which the administrator or nurse, as applicable, determines or becomes aware of that fact. The bill requires the notice to include the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the treatment and prevention of lice and, with regard to notice provided to parents of children assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice, prohibits the notice from identifying the child with lice.

H.B. 1720 requires the commissioner of education to adopt rules as necessary to implement the bill's provisions in a manner that complies with federal law regarding confidentiality of student medical or educational information and any state law relating to the privacy of student information. The bill applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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