

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1680
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Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties raise concerns regarding the challenges facing public health along the Texas-Mexico border. To address these concerns, S.B. 1680 calls for a specialized task force of border health officials to advise the commissioner of state health services.

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. 1680 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to establish the Task Force of Border Health Officials to advise the commissioner of state health services on policy priorities addressing major issues affecting the border region residents' health and health conditions, on raising public awareness of those issues, and on other health issues impacting the border region as determined by the commissioner. The bill requires the task force to study and make recommendations relating to the health problems, conditions, challenges, and needs of the population in the border region and to submit a report of recommendations to the commissioner for short-term and long-term border plans, as described by the bill's provisions, not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year. For purposes of the bill, "border region" means the area consisting of the counties immediately adjacent to the international boundary between the United States and Mexico.

S.B. 1680 requires the Office of Border Health to provide staff support to the task force and any other assistance as needed or required by the task force, if practicable. The bill provides for the composition, leadership, terms of service, and meetings of the task force and establishes that a task force member is not entitled to compensation or reimbursement for expenses incurred in performing the member's duties.

S.B. 1680 requires the task force to make recommendations to the commissioner for a short-term border health improvement plan that identifies health objectives proposed to be accomplished before the fourth anniversary of the date the plan is adopted and a long-term border health improvement plan that identifies health objectives proposed to be accomplished before the ninth anniversary of the date the plan is adopted. The bill requires the commissioner to review the task force's recommendations and, based on those recommendations, recommend short-term and long-term border health improvement plans to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission, identifying specific health objectives that may be implemented

under existing law. The bill requires the executive commissioner to adopt short-term and long-term border health improvement plans and direct DSHS to implement the portions of the plans that may be implemented within existing appropriations under existing law. The bill requires the executive commissioner, not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit a report detailing the actions taken by the task force that includes the status of all projects and activities involving the health issues impacting the border region, the funding for the expenditures, and recommendations for legislation necessary to implement the short-term and long-term border health improvement plans.

S.B. 1680 exempts the task force from Government Code provisions relating to state agency advisory committees, subjects the task force to the Texas Sunset Act, and establishes that, unless continued in existence as provided by that act, the task force is abolished and the bill's provisions expire September 1, 2029. The bill authorizes a state agency or political subdivision of the state, at the request of the task force, to cooperate with the task force to the greatest extent practicable to fully implement the task force's statutory duties.

S.B. 1680 requires the commissioner, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives to appoint the members of the task force not later than October 1, 2017. The bill requires the initial short-term border health improvement plan to include a border health improvement plan for implementation beginning not later than September 1, 2018, and requires DSHS to implement the initiatives in that plan, as directed by the executive commissioner, not later than September 1, 2022. The bill requires the initial long-term border health improvement plan to include a border health improvement plan for implementation beginning not later than September 1, 2020, and requires DSHS to implement the initiatives in that plan, as directed by the executive commissioner, not later than September 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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