

By: Wu

H.B. No. 706

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to monetary assistance for a relative or other designated caregiver of children in foster care.

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

SECTION 1. Section 264.755, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsection (f) to read as follows:

(a) The department shall~~[, subject to the availability of funds,~~] enter into a caregiver assistance agreement with each relative or other designated caregiver to provide monetary assistance and additional support services to the caregiver. Subject to Subsection (f), the ~~[The]~~ monetary assistance and support services shall be based on a family's need, as determined by rules adopted by the executive commissioner.

(b) Monetary assistance provided under this section must include a one-time cash payment to the caregiver on the initial placement of a child or a sibling group. The amount of the cash payment, as determined by the department, may not exceed \$2,000 ~~[\$1,000]~~ for each child. The payment for placement of a sibling group must be at least \$2,000 ~~[\$1,000]~~ for the group, but may not exceed \$2,000 ~~[\$1,000]~~ for each child in the group. The cash payment must be provided not later than the 60th day after the date of ~~[on]~~ the initial placement of each child with the caregiver and is provided to assist the caregiver in purchasing essential child-care

1 items such as furniture and clothing.

2 (f) Monetary assistance paid to a relative or other
3 designated caregiver under a caregiver assistance agreement must be
4 paid at a daily rate that is equal to at least 50 percent of the
5 daily foster care reimbursement rate that the department would pay
6 for the child if the substitute care were provided in a foster home,
7 foster group home, agency foster home, or agency foster group home
8 licensed or certified under Chapter 42, Human Resources Code.

9 SECTION 2. Section 264.755, Family Code, as amended by this
10 Act, applies only to monetary assistance with respect to a child who
11 is initially placed with a relative or other designated caregiver
12 on or after the effective date of this Act. Monetary assistance
13 with respect to a child who is initially placed with a relative or
14 other designated caregiver before that date is governed by the law
15 in effect on the date of the initial placement, and the former law
16 is continued in effect for that purpose.

17 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.