AN ACT
relating to a study of seniors with a visual impairment by the Aging
Texas Well Advisory Committee.
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:
SECTION 1. (a) In this section, "advisory committee" means
the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee.
(b) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human
Services Commission shall direct the advisory committee to assist
the commission to:
(1) determine the appropriate level of independent
living services for the growing number of seniors in the state with
visual impairment; and
(2) make recommendations on the provision of services
to seniors described by Subdivision (1).
(c) Notwithstanding Chapter 551, Government Code, or any
other law, in implementing its duties under this Act, the advisory
committee may meet by telephone conference call, videoconference,
or other similar telecommunication method. A meeting held by
telephone conference call, videoconference, or other similar
telecommunication method is subject to the requirements of Sections
551.125(c), (d), (e), and (f), Government Code.
(d) The advisory committee shall conduct a study to
determine the projected growth and geographic distribution of
seniors with a visual impairment in the next 5 to 10 years and
methods for improving and expanding services, including independent living services, to those seniors. The study must:

(1) identify the barriers to expanding health care services to seniors with a visual impairment;

(2) include methods for expanding coordination efforts with and involvement by public and private entities;

(3) recommend a training curriculum for state agency personnel who provide direct intervention and independent living services to seniors with a visual impairment;

(4) identify and recommend a strategy to increase the number of state agency personnel who provide direct intervention and independent living services to seniors with a visual impairment; and

(5) determine potential public and private collaborators that provide services to seniors with a visual impairment, including:

(A) assessing the current level of collaboration;

(B) identifying the barriers preventing a greater level of collaboration than the current level of collaboration;

(C) identifying the methods, additional incentives, and additional benefits this state may offer to increase collaboration, coordination, and partnerships;

(D) determining the role of public and private entities that provide services to persons with a visual impairment who are not blind; and
(E) establishing methods for incentivizing private entities to provide services to seniors with a visual impairment.

(e) The advisory committee shall develop, in collaboration with private entities and other organizations that assist individuals with a visual impairment, methods to publicize the services available to seniors with a visual impairment. The Health and Human Services Commission may solicit and accept funding for and contract with a private entity for implementing an advisory committee recommendation under this subsection.

(f) The recommendations required by Subsection (b) of this section must be in the form of a new initiative, an immediate proposed regulatory change by a state agency, a proposed statutory amendment, or a suggested funding level.

(g) The advisory committee shall develop and submit a written report on the study, publicity methods, and recommendations developed by the advisory committee to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature not later than November 1, 2018.

(h) This Act expires June 1, 2019.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2017.
S.B. No. 1693

Presidential of the Senate          Speaker of the House
I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1693 passed the Senate on May 3, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate
I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1693 passed the House on May 24, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 2, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor