

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 706
By: Bernal
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Difficulties have been reported in obtaining reimbursement through Medicaid for certain audiology services, resulting in inadequate provision of those services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing from low-income families. This situation has potentially serious educational and developmental implications for these children and could lead to further educational disadvantage for an already vulnerable population. C.S.H.B. 706 seeks to address this issue by making students who need audiology services eligible to receive them through the school health and related services program.

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

C.S.H.B. 706 amends the Education Code to make a child eligible to receive audiology services provided under the school health and related services program if the child is 20 years of age or younger, has a disability or chronic medical condition, is eligible for Medicaid benefits, and has been prescribed the audiology services under an individualized education program created under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or under a plan created under certain provisions of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The bill requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to provide reimbursement to a provider under the program for audiology services provided to an eligible child. The bill requires the executive commissioner of HHSC, in consultation with the Texas Education Agency, to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 706 differs from the original only by amending the caption.