

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1362
By: Wu
Human Services
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been asserted that the daily average caseload for child protective services caseworkers may be misleading because cases vary in complexity and, consequently, in the amount of time and effort required for the caseworkers to process their workload. C.S.H.B. 1362 seeks to provide a pathway toward improving the means of measuring and understanding a caseworker's workload by requiring the Department of Family and Protective Services to study the development and implementation of a scoring system to ensure equity in the distribution of cases among caseworkers that evaluates each case on a number of prescribed bases.

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

C.S.H.B. 1362 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to study the development and implementation of a scoring system to ensure equity in the distribution of cases among child protective services caseworkers. The bill requires DFPS to do the following as part of the study:

- consider the procedures for assigning cases, the methods for managing caseloads, and the factors considered in assigning scores to caseloads and assigning cases to caseworkers;
- determine the average caseload for caseworkers in each DFPS region;
- determine the cost to implement any scoring system developed by DFPS; and
- ensure any scoring system developed by DFPS has the capability of producing monthly reports that include information for each DFPS region.

C.S.H.B. 1362 requires DFPS, not later than September 1, 2020, to report the results of the study and any recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and chairs of the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over child protection issues. The bill's provisions expire September 1, 2021.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1362 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include provisions requiring DFPS to develop a scoring system to ensure equity in the distribution of cases among child protective services caseworkers but instead includes provisions that require DFPS to study the development and implementation of such a scoring system.

The substitute sets the bill's provisions to expire September 1, 2021, and includes a requirement for the results of the study and any related recommendations to be reported by September 1, 2020. The substitute does not include a requirement that a report containing information relating to the caseloads of child protective services caseworkers be submitted not later than December 1 of each year.