

By: Canales

H.B. No. 168

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a study on the creation of bilingual zones in certain areas of this state.

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

SECTION 1. (a) In this Act, "bilingual zone" means a designated area of this state in which:

- (1) English and Spanish are both official languages;
- (2) residents have the right to receive services from state and local governmental entities in both official languages;
- (3) residents may be heard before the state court system in the official language of their choice;
- (4) state and local laws are published in both official languages and given equal legal weight; and
- (5) both official languages have equal status in state and local governmental employment.

(b) The comptroller of public accounts, in cooperation with the secretary of state, the B3 Institute at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and other interested parties, shall conduct a study to evaluate the creation of bilingual zones in certain areas of this state.

(c) In conducting the study, the comptroller shall:

- (1) identify and evaluate areas of this state along the border with the United Mexican States that may be designated bilingual zones;

1 (2) assess the impact the creation and operation of
2 bilingual zones would have on this state's economy; and

3 (3) evaluate the effect the creation and operation of
4 bilingual zones would have on border and international relations.

5 (d) Not later than September 1, 2020, the comptroller of
6 public accounts shall prepare and submit to the legislature a
7 written report containing the results of the study and any
8 recommendations for legislative or other action.

9 (e) This Act expires September 1, 2021.

10 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.