

By: Meza

H.B. No. 2022

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a public school student's right not to participate in or observe animal research.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 25, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 25.904 to read as follows:

Sec. 25.904. STUDENT RIGHTS REGARDING ANIMAL RESEARCH. (a)

In this section, "animal research" means any instruction that involves the use of a deceased animal or harm to a living animal, including dissection, vivisection, incubation, capture, surgery, or any other procedure that is invasive or may result in the animal's death.

(b) A school district shall adopt a policy allowing students enrolled in the district to elect not to participate in or observe all or any part of animal research required or offered as part of any course. The policy must:

(1) permit a student to make the election at any time;

(2) prohibit penalizing or discriminating against a student in any manner for electing not to participate in or observe the research; and

(3) require the teacher of a course in which animal research is required or offered to:

(A) notify each student enrolled in the course regarding the research and the policy adopted under this

1 subsection:

2 (i) on the first instructional day of the
3 course; and

4 (ii) if the research will occur more than 21
5 days after the first instructional day of the course, not later than
6 the 21st day before the date on which the research will occur; and

7 (B) provide a student who elects not to
8 participate in or observe the research an alternative assignment
9 that:

10 (i) does not involve harm to an animal;

11 (ii) provides the student with the
12 information the student is intended to learn from participating in
13 or observing the research or, if the research is required as part of
14 a test, assesses the student's knowledge of that information in an
15 alternative manner;

16 (iii) is substantially similar to the
17 research in regard to the amount of time and effort necessary for
18 completion; and

19 (iv) uses a grading method comparable to
20 the grading method used for the research.

21 (c) An alternative assignment provided under Subsection
22 (b)(3)(B) may involve the use of video recordings, models, books,
23 photographs, simulations, live observations in the wild or in a
24 zoo, or other tools that enable a student to learn about an animal's
25 anatomy, physiology, or life cycle by a method other than animal
26 research.

27 (d) Before the beginning of each school year, a school

1 district shall provide to each student enrolled in the district and
2 each teacher who teaches a course in which animal research is
3 required or offered written notice that includes:

4 (1) information regarding the policy adopted under
5 Subsection (b); and

6 (2) a list of each course in which animal research is
7 required or offered in that school year.

8 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2019-2020
9 school year.

10 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
11 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
12 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
13 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
14 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.