

By: Watson

S.B. No. 487

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the office of minority statistics and engagement in the Department of Family and Protective Services.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 40, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 40.043 to read as follows:

Sec. 40.043. OFFICE OF MINORITY STATISTICS AND ENGAGEMENT.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003, Education Code.

(2) "Office" means the office of minority statistics and engagement established under this section.

(b) Using existing resources, the department, in consultation with an institution of higher education and the child welfare community, shall establish an office of minority statistics and engagement within the department to address the disproportionality in the rate of use of child protective and welfare services by and the provision of those services to children who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group and are in the child welfare system.

(c) In collaboration with an institution of higher education and appropriate persons in the child welfare community, the office shall identify the causes of the disproportionality described by Subsection (b) and develop recommendations for

1 addressing those causes and for improving the rate of use of child
2 protective and welfare services by and the provision of those
3 services to children and their families. In identifying the causes
4 and developing recommendations, the office shall:

5 (1) share with the institution any information
6 necessary for the institution to assist in identifying the causes
7 and developing recommendations;

8 (2) consider the unique needs and resources of this
9 state; and

10 (3) consider the outcomes for children in the child
11 welfare system and the services necessary to improve the outcomes.

12 (d) The office shall annually submit a written report to the
13 governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of
14 representatives, and chair of each standing legislative committee
15 with primary jurisdiction over the department that includes:

16 (1) the recommendations developed under Subsection
17 (c);

18 (2) methods to address disproportionality across the
19 child welfare system; and

20 (3) a summary of the initiatives developed by the
21 department during the preceding year to address the causes of
22 disproportionality identified in Subsection (c).

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