

By: Hall

S.B. No. 1607

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a study on issues regarding service animals.

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

SECTION 1. (a) In this section:

(1) "Commission" means the Health and Human Services Commission.

(2) "Service animal" means an animal that is specially trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability or otherwise assist the person with the activities of daily living.

(b) The commission shall conduct a study on issues regarding service animals. In conducting the study, the commission may collaborate with and seek input from other appropriate state agencies, local governmental entities, and advocacy groups for persons with disabilities.

(c) The study must identify:

(1) the types of animals that can be trained as service animals and the types of animals that are defined as service animals under state and federal laws;

(2) the types of tasks a service animal can perform for and other assistance the animal can provide to a person with a disability, each categorized according to disability and type of animal;

(3) the unique types of tasks a service animal can perform for and other assistance the animal can provide to a

1 veteran;

2 (4) existing state laws that address a person who
3 falsely identifies an animal as a service animal and proposed state
4 laws and policies designed to prevent that false identification;

5 (5) methods to prevent the fraudulent sale of an
6 animal as a service animal or the sale of an animal as a service
7 animal with a claimed level of or claimed specialized training that
8 the animal does not have;

9 (6) methods to prevent other types of fraud concerning
10 the provision of a service animal to a veteran;

11 (7) existing service animal training programs that
12 certify an animal as a service animal;

13 (8) the best methods for licensing or certifying an
14 animal as a service animal; and

15 (9) any other issues relating to the training,
16 certification, identification, provision, or use of, or tasks
17 performed or other assistance provided by, a service animal.

18 (d) Not later than November 1, 2020, the commission shall
19 submit a written report on the findings of the study to the standing
20 committees of the senate and house of representatives having
21 jurisdiction over health and human services. The report must
22 include recommendations for policy and statutory changes,
23 including any proposed legislation, that are based on the results
24 of the study.

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