

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2772
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Juvenile Justice & Family Issues
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The state's crime victims' compensation program offers financial assistance to victims of certain criminally injurious conduct for expenses such as medical and mental health care costs and costs of relocation to a safer home. Currently, the full range of crime victims' compensation benefits can only be accessed by one category of family violence victims, family or household members, which leaves dating violence victims and child abuse victims experiencing family violence without access to the full range of crime victims' compensation supports. Clarifying access to this compensation for victims of dating violence, which is an often overlooked form of intimate partner violence even though current or former dating partners reportedly commit the highest percentage of violent intimate partner victimizations, is critical. Additionally, children who experience both child abuse and family violence need additional support and should not be excluded from key crime victim assistance. H.B. 2772 seeks to address these issues and ensure all victims of family violence, as that term is defined in the Family Code, can access crime victims' compensation by revising the definitions of "family violence" and "household member" for purposes of crime victims' compensation.

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

H.B. 2772 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to make the following changes with respect to the Crime Victims' Compensation Act:

- aligns the definition of "family violence" with the definition under certain Family Code provisions to expand the conduct considered family violence for purposes of the act to include dating violence and certain abuse by a family or household member toward a child of the family or household; and
- removes the condition that an individual who resides in the same permanent household as a victim at the time the criminally injurious conduct occurred be related to the victim by consanguinity or affinity in order for the individual to qualify as a household member for purposes of receiving compensation under the act.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.