

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3034
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Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised regarding the increasing rate of individuals experiencing homelessness across Texas. It has been reported that many of these individuals leave their hometowns out of fear of dealing with certain personal circumstances, such as domestic violence, and these sudden departures leave relatives and friends unable to locate the individual in hopes of reuniting. There have been calls for the creation of a statewide homelessness data system to share information between applicable state agencies and local governmental entities that can help connect and refer homeless individuals to services, including affordable housing opportunities. C.S.H.B. 3034 seeks to address this issue by requiring the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless to create a statewide homelessness data system.

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

C.S.H.B. 3034 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless to collaborate with a state agency designated by the council to establish a statewide homelessness data system through which:

- state agencies and local governmental entities, including law enforcement agencies, court systems, school districts, and emergency service providers, are able to share information related to individuals experiencing homelessness; and
- those entities are able to access information related to individuals experiencing homelessness in order to connect or refer those individuals to services, including affordable housing opportunities.

C.S.H.B. 3034 requires the council and the designated state agency to do the following in developing the data system:

- consult with representatives of applicable entities to determine the challenges faced by those entities in addressing homelessness and how best to improve the responses to those challenges;
- enter into data sharing agreements as necessary for the exchange of information relating to individuals experiencing homelessness through the data system; and
- ensure that information stored in the data system that is confidential under state or federal law is not disclosed.

C.S.H.B. 3034 requires the data system to do the following:

- to the extent permitted by a data sharing agreement, collect data from other homelessness data systems maintained or operated by a state agency, local law enforcement agency, or other entity of the state; and
- collect, aggregate, analyze, and share homelessness information submitted to the data system with entities that have access to the system.

C.S.H.B. 3034 requires the council or an entity designated by the council, not later than September 1, 2023, to prepare and submit to the legislature and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs a written report that evaluates the effectiveness of the data system in addressing homelessness in Texas.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3034 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The original included a reference to any relevant person sharing information related to individuals experiencing homelessness through the statewide data system. The substitute removes this reference.

The original required the council to design the data system to allow members of the public to access information in the system related to individuals experiencing homelessness. The substitute removes this public access.