

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 454
By: Kolkhorst
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Health and Human Services Commission contracts with 39 local mental health authorities (LMHAs) to deliver mental health services to Texans on a local basis. Last session, the legislature enacted a one-time initiative to better leverage the resources of individual LMHAs by requiring LMHAs to work together in groups to produce regional plans to build new capacity, reduce local government costs, lower emergency room visits, and reduce transportation costs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the regional planning groups were only able to partially fulfill their purpose. S.B. 454 seeks to provide for the continuation of the LMHA groups and makes the planning process permanent.

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

S.B. 454 amends the Government Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to require each local mental health authority (LMHA) group established by HHSC to meet at least quarterly to collaborate on planning and implementing regional strategies to reduce the following:

- costs to local governments of providing services to persons experiencing a mental health crisis;
- transportation to mental health facilities of persons served by a member LMHA;
- incarceration of persons with mental illness in county jails that are located in an area served by a member LMHA; and
- visits by persons with mental illness at hospital emergency rooms located in an area served by a member LMHA.

S.B. 454 requires HHSC, in coordination with each LMHA group, to annually update the mental health services development plan that was initially developed by HHSC and the group. The updated plan must include a description of actions taken by the group to implement the plan's regional strategies and new regional strategies identified by the group to reduce the circumstances set out by the bill, including the estimated number of outpatient and inpatient beds necessary to meet the goals of each group's regional strategy.

S.B. 454 requires HHSC, not later than December 1 of each year, beginning in 2022, to produce and publish on its website a report containing the most recent version of each mental health

services development plan developed by HHSC and an LMHA group. The bill requires HHSC to use federal funds in accordance with state and federal guidelines to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.