

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 801  
By: Kolkhorst  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Agricultural education programs are essential to teaching students about agriculture, food, and natural resources. Most importantly, these programs ensure that young students understand where food comes from before it reaches the grocery store. It is also vital that our youth understand the value of agriculture, which serves a foundational role in the Texas economy. While Texas agriculture education programs are offered as an option in Texas middle and high schools, they are not necessarily emphasized in elementary schools. S.B. 801 seeks to expand the opportunities for elementary school students to understand and appreciate agriculture education in an age-appropriate way by requiring the Texas Education Agency, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and nonprofits with expertise in agriculture education, to develop an agriculture education program for these students.

### **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. 801 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop an agriculture education program for elementary school students to encourage appreciation and improve students' understanding of agriculture. The bill requires TEA, in developing the program, to coordinate with the Department of Agriculture and nonprofit organizations with expertise in agriculture education, as identified by TEA. The bill requires TEA to develop a list of agriculture education programs approved by TEA and the State Board of Education that may be used as part of the curriculum for elementary school students. A program included on the list must be available to an elementary school at no cost to the public school district or open-enrollment charter school.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.