87R8648 MWC-D

By:  Reynolds H.B. No. 2355

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a task force to study the legal and societal barriers to equality for persons who are transgender.

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

SECTION 1.  (a) In this section, "task force" means the transgender equality task force.

(b)  The task force is established to study the legal and societal barriers to equality for persons in this state who are transgender.

(c)  The task force is composed of:

(1)  11 members appointed by the governor as follows:

(A)  one representative of the Texas Department of Banking;

(B)  one representative of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;

(C)  one representative of the Department of Family and Protective Services;

(D)  one representative of the Texas Department of Insurance;

(E)  one representative of the Department of State Health Services;

(F)  one representative of the Texas Education Agency;

(G)  one representative of the Health and Human Services Commission;

(H)  one representative of an institution of higher education;

(I)  one representative of the Texas Workforce Commission civil rights division;

(J)  one representative of the Texas Workforce Commission division of workforce development; and

(K)  one representative of a nonprofit organization dedicated to civil rights;

(2)  two members appointed by the lieutenant governor as follows:

(A)  a parent or guardian of a person who is transgender; and

(B)  an attorney who specializes in transgender rights; and

(3)  two members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives as follows:

(A)  a physician who specializes in transgender health issues; and

(B)  one person who is transgender.

(d)  The task force shall hold its first meeting not later than October 1, 2021, and shall elect a presiding officer from among its membership. The task force shall hold subsequent meetings at least quarterly at the call of the presiding officer.

(e)  A task force member is not entitled to compensation for service on the task force but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force duties. The task force may accept gifts, grants, and donations to pay for those expenses.

(f)  The Texas Workforce Commission civil rights division shall provide administrative support services at the request of the task force.

(g)  The task force shall study the state actions necessary to ensure equality and improve the lives of persons who are transgender, with particular attention to the following areas:

(1)  health care, including access to health care providers who are trained in transgender medical issues;

(2)  long-term care for persons who are transgender and chronically ill or of advanced age;

(3)  education;

(4)  higher education;

(5)  housing, including homelessness prevention and reduction;

(6)  employment; and

(7)  criminal justice, including the following:

(A)  raising transgender awareness among law enforcement through training; and

(B)  facilitating the appropriate placement of persons who are transgender in correctional facilities based on a person's gender identity.

(h)  A state agency shall cooperate with and assist the task force in carrying out the duties of the task force.

(i)  Not later than December 1, 2022, the task force shall prepare and submit to the governor and the legislature a written report that summarizes the task force's findings under this section and recommends solutions for advancing transgender equality and improving the lives of persons in this state who are transgender.

(j)  The task force is abolished and this Act expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.