2021S0229-1 03/23/21

By:  Campbell S.B. No. 2158

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to authorizing the Texas Education Agency to provide identification kits for certain children.

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

SECTION 1.  SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the Texas Child Identification Act of 2021.

SECTION 2.  LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that:

(1)  the proactive collection and central storage of comprehensive identification information about individual children by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies is resource intensive; and

(2)  the National Child Identification Program, known as "Safety Blitz":

(A)  is a national community service initiative that has partnered with the states and their attorneys general, local law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community organizations to provide families with an inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kit, which can be turned over to law enforcement by the parent or guardian of a child to provide information on a missing or trafficked child; and

(B)  promotes the proactive collection and storage of comprehensive identification information within the home, decentralizing the process for law enforcement agencies that may lack the resources to collect and centrally store vital identification information related to individual children.

SECTION 3.  AUTHORIZATION TO PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION KITS. Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 38.028 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.028.  CHILD IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM. (a)  In this section, "elementary school" has the meaning assigned by Section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 1401(6)).

(b)  To promote the proactive collection and storage of comprehensive identification information by parents and guardians, the agency shall provide inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kits to any parent or guardian who requests one and whose child attends kindergarten or elementary school. A kit may be submitted by the parent or guardian to federal, state, tribal, or local law enforcement in an effort to locate and return missing or trafficked children.

SECTION 4.  CONTINGENT UPON APPROPRIATION. The Texas Education Agency is required to implement Section 38.028, Education Code, as added by this Act, only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, the agency may, but is not required to, implement that section using other appropriations available for that purpose.

SECTION 5.  EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.