

By: Sherman, Sr.

H.B. No. 420

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a task force on maternal mortality in African American women.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 32, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Subchapter G to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER G. TASK FORCE ON MATERNAL MORTALITY IN
AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

Sec. 32.201. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "task force" means the task force established by the executive commissioner under Section 32.202.

Sec. 32.202. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE. The executive commissioner shall establish a task force to:

(1) study maternal mortality rates for African American women and any related disparities; and

(2) develop and provide recommendations on improving maternal health outcomes among African American women.

Sec. 32.203. COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE; PRESIDING OFFICER; COMPENSATION. (a) The task force is composed of nine members appointed by the executive commissioner as follows:

(1) three licensed obstetricians or gynecologists certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology each with 15 or more years of experience in either field and a patient base consisting of not less than 25 percent individuals who are

1 members of a racial minority;

2 (2) one primary care physician with 15 or more years of
3 experience in that field and whose expertise is in maternal health;

4 (3) one surgeon with 15 or more years of experience in
5 that field and whose expertise is in maternal health;

6 (4) one anesthesiologist with 15 or more years of
7 experience in that field and whose expertise is in maternal health;

8 (5) one licensed mental health professional with 15 or
9 more years of experience in that field and whose expertise is in
10 postpartum depression; and

11 (6) two individuals with relevant and appropriate
12 expertise in maternal health.

13 (b) In making the appointments under Subsection (a)(1), the
14 executive commissioner shall ensure:

15 (1) one member is an obstetrician or gynecologist with
16 10 or more years of experience specializing in the field of
17 neonatology;

18 (2) one member is an obstetrician or gynecologist with
19 10 or more years of experience specializing in the field of
20 perinatology; and

21 (3) one member is an obstetrician or gynecologist with
22 experience working at a community hospital as an obstetrician or
23 gynecologist for less than nine years.

24 (c) The task force members shall elect a presiding officer
25 from among the membership of the task force.

26 (d) The executive commissioner shall fill a vacancy on the
27 task force by appointing a person who has the same qualifications as

1 required for the original appointee.

2 (e) A task force member is not entitled to compensation for
3 service on the task force but is entitled to reimbursement for
4 actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force
5 duties authorized by the presiding officer, provided funding is
6 available for that purpose.

7 Sec. 32.204. MEETINGS. (a) The task force shall meet at
8 least quarterly and at other times at the call of the presiding
9 officer.

10 (b) Notwithstanding Chapter 551, Government Code, or any
11 other law, the task force may meet by telephone conference call,
12 videoconference, or other similar telecommunication method. A
13 meeting held by telephone conference call, videoconference, or
14 other similar telecommunication method is subject to the
15 requirements of Sections 551.125(c), (d), (e), and (f), Government
16 Code.

17 Sec. 32.205. GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. The task force
18 may accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to carry out
19 task force duties under this subchapter.

20 Sec. 32.206. BIENNIAL REPORTS; IMPLEMENTATION OF CERTAIN
21 RECOMMENDATIONS. (a) Not later than September 1 of each
22 even-numbered year, the task force shall prepare and submit to each
23 member of the legislature and the commission a report that:

24 (1) includes the results of the study conducted by the
25 task force and recommendations for legislative or regulatory action
26 based on those results; and

27 (2) examines and considers any trends or changes in

1 maternal health.

2 (b) To the extent permitted by law and as the executive
3 commissioner determines appropriate, the commission shall
4 implement any regulatory recommendations included in a report under
5 this section that are within the commission's prescribed authority.

6 Sec. 32.207. APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAW. Chapter 2110,
7 Government Code, does not apply to the task force.

8 Sec. 32.208. TASK FORCE ABOLISHMENT; EXPIRATION OF
9 SUBCHAPTER. The task force is abolished and this subchapter
10 expires September 1, 2029.

11 SECTION 2. Not later than November 1, 2021, the executive
12 commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall
13 establish and appoint members to the task force on maternal
14 mortality in African American women in accordance with Subchapter
15 G, Chapter 32, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

16 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.