

By: Springer

S.B. No. 657

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to regular efficiency audits of public benefits programs.

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

SECTION 1. Title 2, Subtitle C, Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 31.019 to read as follows:

Sec. 34.019. EFFICIENCY AUDIT. (a) For purposes of this section, "efficiency audit" means an investigation of the implementation and administration of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program established under Part A, Subchapter IV, Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 601 et seq.) and the State Temporary Assistance and Support Services Program authorized by Chapter 34, Human Resources Code for the purpose of assessing the fiscal management of the program, efficiency of resource utilization, and effectiveness of state efforts at achieving the four goals of the program as enumerated in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 601(a).

(b) The State Auditor shall be responsible for ensuring that the efficiency audit is conducted in accordance with the requirements of this Section.

(c) The initial efficiency audit shall be conducted in fiscal year 2022 with subsequent audits occurring every six years during the even-numbered year immediately preceding the convening of a regular session of the legislature.

(d) The Health and Human Services Commission, as administrator for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

1 program in Texas, shall pay for costs associated with an efficiency  
2 audit out of existing resources.

3 (e) The State Auditor shall select a third-party auditor to  
4 conduct an efficiency audit under this section no later than six  
5 months before the end of the fiscal year in which an efficiency  
6 audit is required.

7 (f) The third-party auditor must maintain independence from  
8 all departments subject to evaluation and those receiving or  
9 expending funds under the TANF program.

10 (g) The third-party auditor shall complete the audit not  
11 later than three months after the date the auditor was engaged.

12 (h) The Legislative Budget Board shall establish guidelines  
13 identifying the scope and areas of investigation of an efficiency  
14 audit, including identification of:

15 (1) resources being used effectively and efficiently  
16 to achieve desired outcomes for program beneficiaries;

17 (2) resources being used for purposes other than the  
18 intended goals of the TANF program;

19 (3) potential cost savings or reallocations; and

20 (4) opportunities for improving services through  
21 consolidation of essential functions, outsourcing, and elimination  
22 of duplicative efforts.

23 (i) The third-party auditor shall prepare and submit a  
24 report of the audit and recommendations for efficiency improvements  
25 before November 1 of the year the audit is conducted to the  
26 governor, the Legislative Budget Board, the State Auditor, the  
27 commissioners of each state department reviewed, and the chairs of

1 the House Human Services Committee and the Senate Health and Human  
2 Services Committee. The report, recommendations, and full audit  
3 shall also be posted to the public websites of the State Auditor and  
4 Health and Human Services Commission.

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