

By: Hughes, et al.
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S.B. No. 1138

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to a study on streamlining public safety net programs to
3 reduce costs and improve outcomes for recipients under the
4 programs.

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

6 SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

7 (1) "Board" means the Legislative Budget Board.

8 (2) "Safety net program" means any needs-based state
9 or federal program that provides food, medical, or financial
10 assistance to a recipient under the program, including:

11 (A) the child health plan program under Chapter
12 62, Health and Safety Code;

13 (B) the financial assistance program under
14 Chapter 31, Human Resources Code;

15 (C) the medical assistance program under Chapter
16 32, Human Resources Code;

17 (D) the supplemental nutrition assistance
18 program under Chapter 33, Human Resources Code;

19 (E) the federal special supplemental nutrition
20 program for women, infants, and children authorized by 42 U.S.C.
21 Section 1786;

22 (F) the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program
23 administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community
24 Affairs in accordance with the federal Low-Income Home Energy

1 Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. Section 8621 et seq.); and

2 (G) the child care services program operated by
3 the Texas Workforce Commission.

4 SECTION 2. STUDY OF SAFETY NET PROGRAMS. (a) The board, in
5 coordination with the Health and Human Services Commission and
6 other applicable state agencies, shall conduct a study on safety
7 net programs available in this state during the five-year period
8 preceding the effective date of this Act for the purposes of:

9 (1) streamlining program eligibility requirements,
10 resources, and benefits;

11 (2) improving outcomes for recipients under the
12 programs; and

13 (3) reducing costs to taxpayers.

14 (b) The study must include:

15 (1) an examination of:

16 (A) the total amount of:

17 (i) taxpayer revenue spent per safety net
18 program;

19 (ii) state money appropriated per program;

20 and

21 (iii) federal money received per program;

22 (B) benefits provided under each program;

23 (C) the number of recipients enrolled in or
24 otherwise receiving benefits under each program;

25 (D) aggregate demographic and socioeconomic
26 information on recipients under each program including information
27 relating to:

1 (i) the average household income of
2 recipients under each program;

3 (ii) the employment status of recipients
4 or, if recipients are dependents, the parents or guardians of
5 recipients, under each program;

6 (iii) the marital status of recipients or,
7 if recipients are dependents, the parents or guardians of
8 recipients, under each program; and

9 (iv) the average number of dependents in
10 recipient households under each program;

11 (E) duplicative services and administrative
12 activities among programs;

13 (F) the percentage of state money appropriated to
14 each program that is directly spent on providing benefits to
15 recipients under the program and the percentage that is spent on
16 staff and other administrative costs;

17 (G) the percentage of recipients who become
18 ineligible for each program because the recipient no longer meets
19 the income eligibility requirements;

20 (H) the number of individuals who begin, but do
21 not complete, an application for benefits under each program and a
22 statement of that number as a percentage of the overall number of
23 recipients under each program;

24 (I) the rate at which former recipients of each
25 program later reapply for benefits under the program; and

26 (J) the average length of time between an initial
27 application for benefits and approval under each program;

1 (2) a cost-benefit analysis that compares the costs of
2 providing each program with the program's effectiveness at
3 transitioning recipients to self-sufficiency; and

4 (3) a statistical analysis of the data collected under
5 Subdivisions (1) and (2).

6 (c) The board shall collect any information necessary to
7 conduct the study from each state agency that administers or
8 operates a safety net program. At the request of the board, each
9 agency shall submit the requested information to the board within a
10 reasonable time, as prescribed by the board.

11 (d) The board shall conduct the study and prepare the report
12 required by Section 3 of this Act using existing resources.

13 SECTION 3. REPORT ON SAFETY NET PROGRAMS. Not later than
14 September 1, 2022, the board shall:

15 (1) submit a report on the board's findings and
16 recommendations to the legislature, including recommendations on
17 how to:

18 (A) simplify and streamline each safety net
19 program;

20 (B) improve outcomes of each program; and

21 (C) lower costs to taxpayers for safety net
22 programs; and

23 (2) post the report on the board's Internet website.

24 SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. This Act expires January 1, 2023.

25 SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect
26 immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members
27 elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas

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1 Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for
2 immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.