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S.B. No. 1745

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a joint interim committee to study colonias and colonia initiatives in this state.

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

SECTION 1. INTERIM COMMITTEE; STUDY. (a) In this section, "colonia" has the meaning assigned by Section 2306.581, Government Code.

(b) A joint interim committee is established to study colonias and colonia initiatives in this state.

(c) The joint interim committee is composed of the members of the standing committees of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over colonias and colonia issues. The committee members shall select a presiding officer from among the membership.

(d) In conducting the study under this section, the joint interim committee shall:

(1) determine the best methods for updating and maintaining colonia identification systems and for identifying and classifying colonias in which the highest public health risks exist;

(2) consider whether colonias should be defined uniformly across all relevant state agencies and whether that definition should include essential metrics such as:

(A) economic mobility levels;

(B) poverty levels;

- 1 (C) mortality rates;
- 2 (D) health professional shortage area scores;
- 3 and
- 4 (E) the average level of education attained by
- 5 colonia residents;
- 6 (3) to address the enduring lack of services and
- 7 infrastructure in colonias, assess best practices and funding needs
- 8 for surveying the services and infrastructure available in, and
- 9 demographics of, each colonia;
- 10 (4) assess the status of state agency tracking and
- 11 reporting of state-funded colonia projects and whether
- 12 improvements to the tracking or reporting mechanisms are necessary;
- 13 (5) determine and assess any non-infrastructure needs
- 14 within colonias and options for this state to address those needs;
- 15 and
- 16 (6) assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on
- 17 colonias and whether additional state services are necessary to
- 18 address those impacts.
- 19 (e) The joint interim committee has all other powers and
- 20 duties provided to a special or select committee by the rules of the
- 21 senate and house of representatives, by Subchapter B, Chapter 301,
- 22 Government Code, and by policies of the senate and house committees
- 23 on administration.
- 24 (f) Not later than September 1, 2022, the joint interim
- 25 committee shall prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant
- 26 governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the
- 27 legislature a written report that includes the findings of the

1 committee under this section, including any legislative
2 recommendations.

3 SECTION 2. ABOLITION OF COMMITTEE. The joint interim
4 committee established by Section 1 of this Act is abolished and this
5 Act expires November 1, 2022.

6 SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September
7 1, 2021.