By: Powell S.B. No. 1862

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a task force by the commissioner of education on students residing in temporary living arrangements.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.928 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.928. TASK FORCE ON STUDENTS RESIDING IN TEMPORARY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS. (a) The commissioner shall establish a task force to identify the number of students residing in extended stay motels or other temporary living arrangements and study the educational outcomes of those students.

(b) The task force is composed of an odd number of not fewer than 13 members appointed by the commissioner and must include:

(1) an employee of a school district or open-enrollment charter school designated as a homeless education liaison;

(2) a representative of law enforcement;

(3) an emergency medical technician;

(4) a representative of a local mental health authority;

(5) a representative of an extended stay motel or similar temporary living shelter;

(6) two public school administrators;

(7) an employee of an institution of higher education,
as that term is defined by Section 61.003;

(8) a representative from a community service entity that provides services to homeless people;

(9) a mental health services provider;

(10) a school counselor;

(11) a representative of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs; and

(12) a representative of the Health and Human Services Commission.

(c) In appointing members to the task force, the commissioner shall appoint, to the greatest extent practicable, persons who reside in areas that have a significant percentage of homeless students, as determined by the commissioner.

(d) The task force shall:

(1) identify local, state, and other laws or regulations that negatively impact rates of student homelessness;

(2) study unseen and unintended consequences of students residing in extended stay motels or in other temporary living arrangements, including dropout rates and rates of prostitution, drug use, and other negative consequences;

(3) recommend policies and resources that would assist families and students residing in extended stay motels or in other temporary living arrangements;

(4) recommend methods to increase student attendance and educational outcomes for students residing in extended stay motels or in other temporary living arrangements; and

(5) study the impact of the coronavirus disease
(COVID-19) pandemic on the student homelessness population.

(e) Not later than September 1, 2022, the task force shall submit to the legislature a report on the task force's findings and recommendations. The agency shall post the report on the agency's Internet website.

(f) The task force is abolished and this section expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the commissioner of education shall appoint the members of the task force established under Section 29.928, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. The commissioner of education is required to implement this Act only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, the commissioner may, but is not required to, implement this Act using other money available for that purpose.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.