

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 940  
By: Dutton  
Human Services  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The average annual cost of infant care in Texas in 2022 was \$9,324, which amounts to \$777 a month, and the average cost for child care for a four-year-old was \$7,062, or \$589 each month. In fact, infant care costs exceed the cost of in-state tuition for a four-year public college. Despite rising salaries, these findings from the Economic Policy Institute make clear why many parents report struggling to afford one of the most significant expenses in their family budget, which is child care. According to Forbes, when employees receive assistance that results in them having affordable, accessible care, employers report fewer absent workers, less turnover, increased stability in the workforce, and more satisfied workers. H.B. 940 seeks to create a joint commission to study the availability and affordability of child care to help ensure that quality, affordable, and accessible child care settings are available for working parents in every community in Texas.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 940 establishes a seven-member private child care task force consisting of one member appointed by the governor to serve as the governor's representative, three senators appointed by the lieutenant governor, and three representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives. The bill requires the task force to do the following:

- conduct a study examining the amounts charged for and the availability of child care provided by private child care providers and methods to reduce those costs and increase the availability of that care;
- develop recommendations to reduce the amounts charged for and increase the availability of child care by private child care providers; and
- develop and submit, not later than November 1, 2024, a written report on the study and recommendations developed by the task force to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker, and each member of the legislature.

The bill authorizes the task force to request relevant information from the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) in conducting the study and requires HHSC to comply with the request.

H.B. 940 sets out provisions relating to reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses incurred by task force members, the task force's presiding officer, and task force meetings, which may be held remotely subject to certain state open meetings law requirements. The task force is abolished and the bill's provisions expire June 1, 2024.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.