

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2181
By: Rose
Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Youth homelessness is a serious problem in Texas, affecting urban and rural communities alike. The state's failure to prevent youth homelessness or aid those experiencing homelessness often leads to unnecessary and costly consequences, including academic failure, criminal justice system involvement, and physical and mental health challenges. Youth Count Texas listed the top reasons why youth and young adults are homeless or do not have a permanent place to live. These included reasons relating to finances, criminal justice, abandonment by a parent or guardian, and involvement with foster care or Child Protective Services. Among young adults ages 18-25, a survey by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago found that one in 10 experiences some form of homelessness over the course of one year, and in both rural and urban counties, more than nine percent are homeless. Additionally, one in 30 youth ages 13-17 surveyed experienced a form of homelessness over a 12-month period. Of those experiencing homelessness, 29 percent of youth were reported as having substance use problems, and 69 percent were indicated as having mental health difficulties. Providing aid to these young adults in the first months of their independence would help ensure they are able to pull themselves out of this vicious cycle of poverty. C.S.H.B. 2181 seeks to address this issue by providing for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to administer a youth and young adult homeless housing and services grant program.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2181 amends the Government Code to authorize the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) to administer a youth and young adult homeless housing and services grant program to do the following:

- provide for the construction, development, or procurement of housing for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness;
- provide financial assistance to local providers of programs and services to prevent and eliminate homelessness; and
- increase access to safe housing and services for youth and young adults across Texas.

The bill defines "young adult" as an individual who is 18 years of age or older but younger than 26 years of age.

C.S.H.B. 2181 authorizes TDHCA to adopt rules to govern the program's administration, including rules that provide for the allocation of any available money for the program and prescribing detailed guidelines on the program's scope. The bill authorizes TDHCA to use any available money to administer the program, including legislative appropriations, appropriation transfers from the trustee programs within the governor's office, available federal money, and any other statutorily authorized and appropriate funding sources.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 2181 differs from the introduced only by including a Texas Legislative Council draft number in the footer.