

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2898  
By: Garcia  
Juvenile Justice & Family Issues  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to the Department of State Health Services, suicide is one of the leading causes of death of children in Texas due to external causes, and hospitals across the state have seen a large increase in the number of pediatric patients suffering from mental health crises over the last few years. Child fatality review teams are tasked with reviewing local child fatalities, determining whether they were preventable, and making essential recommendations to state agencies on methods to reduce future deaths. While the teams may consider suicide deaths as preventable in a limited number of cases, mental health advocates have raised the issue that the teams do not uniformly classify child suicide as preventable. As a result, a true understanding of why child suicides are increasing may not be known. H.B. 2898 seeks to address this issue by classifying suicide as a preventable death for purposes relating to the review and investigation of child fatalities, which will allow for better investigation of the causes behind rising suicide rates and help to produce recommendations on how the legislature and state agencies could better address the mental health crises affecting children.

### **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. 2898 amends the Family Code to classify suicide as a preventable death for purposes relating to the review and investigation of child fatalities.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.