

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2975
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International Relations & Economic Development
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised about the Work and Family Policies Clearinghouse under state law. The Clearinghouse was originally used to house a grant program which is now depleted and therefore serves very little purpose, justifying an update to the law. Additionally, the website should be repurposed to display information and resources regarding work and family policies to benefit their workforce. H.B. 2975 seeks to disband the Work and Family Policies Clearinghouse and require the Texas Workforce Commission instead to maintain work and family policies resources on its website to help small businesses as they strive to provide the best possible benefits for their employees.

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 Workforce Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2975 amends the Labor Code to remove the provision establishing the Work and Family Policies Clearinghouse within the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The bill requires TWC to maintain on its website information and resources for employers who are considering, selecting, or implementing work and family policies, together with an explanation that TWC does not and may not provide legal advice and an employer is not required by law to implement a work and family policy included on the TWC website. The bill transfers the establishment and administration of the dependent care grant program from the clearinghouse to TWC, including the requirement to adopt rules governing the submission and approval of grant requests and the cancellation of grants.

H.B. 2975 authorizes TWC, in providing information and resources under provisions relating to work and family policies, to encourage employers to implement work and family policies by doing the following:

- providing examples of work and family policies or providing economic data that demonstrates the economic benefits realized by employers who implement work and family policies;
- advertising the availability of federal and state tax incentives for such policies; and
- sharing other relevant information and resources provided to TWC voluntarily by employers, employees, and other stakeholders.

H.B. 2975 authorizes TWC to share materials on work and family policies that are published by state agencies with employers, job applicants, and other interested persons. The bill authorizes TWC to adopt rules to implement provisions relating to work and family policies. The bill exempts information and resources voluntarily shared with TWC from the applicability of requirements for donations accepted by TWC that further the lawful purposes and objectives of TWC under provisions relating to work and family policies to be reported in the public records of TWC. The bill defines "work and family policies" as family-related employment policies, including hiring and scheduling practices, employee benefits, dependent care assistance, and other terms of employment related to family.

H.B. 2975 repeals Section 81.004, Labor Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.