

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R13281 TYPED

S.B. 1804
By: Springer
Local Government
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The current definition of "homelessness" in Texas is limited to people on the streets or staying in shelters, which excludes those who are forced to live in other temporary, homeless situations. This definition further excludes families, children, and youth disproportionately. With city shelters being full and rural shelters being sparse, families are forced to turn to various other situations that are less safe.

Some claim that the state does not have the funds to meet the needs of the homeless population and expanding the definition would only exasperate the problem. Expanding the definition will serve to help state agencies redesign program eligibilities that best meet the need of all people who are homeless. This bill intends to change the definition of homelessness found in the Texas Government Code to match the definition that has been in federal statute since 1987.

As proposed, S.B. 1804 amends current law relating to standardizing definitions of homelessness.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 531.001, Government Code, by adding Subsection (9), to provide that "homeless," "homelessness," and "homeless persons" mean individuals or families lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter I) as it existed on January 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 539.001, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 539.001. New heading: DEFINITIONS. Provides that, in Chapter 539 (Community Collaboratives):

(1) creates this subdivision from existing text and makes a nonsubstantive change.

(2) "Homeless," "homeless family," "homeless youth," and "person experiencing homelessness" mean individuals or families lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter I) as it existed on January 1, 2023.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 2306.004, Government Code, by adding Subsection (12-b), to provide that "homeless," "homelessness," and "homeless individuals" mean individuals or families lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter I) as it existed on January 1, 2023.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2023.