

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 2315  
By: Hughes  
Finance  
6/15/2023  
Enrolled

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Current federal law restricts the consolidation of federally funded social services with workforce development programs. Utah is the only state in the country allowed to consolidate workforce and social services since its previously existing, consolidated program is "grandfathered." Every other state, including Texas, is forced to service the needs of qualified applicants for social services through separate programs.

These separately run programs are more costly and inefficient. If social service programs in Texas were consolidated, they would be more effective, cost efficient, and have the ability to service individuals with a single case manager. Trigger legislation is needed to prepare for the implementation of consolidated programs when federal law allows.

S.B. 2315 creates a taskforce to develop a consolidation plan for applicable state and local agencies and services to be ready when the federal law or guidance allows the consolidation of safety net programs in Texas.

S.B. 2315 amends current law relating to the creation of a task force to develop a plan for the consolidation of the functions of workforce development programs administered by the Texas Workforce Commission and social services programs administered by the Health and Human Services Commission.

### **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. Provides that the purpose of this Act is to provide for the creation of a task force to develop a plan for the consolidation of workforce development programs administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and social services programs administered by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). Provides that though federal law and guidance currently restricts the consolidation of these federally funded services, the United States Congress is considering legislation to reverse the federal restrictions and allow states to consolidate these functions. Provides that this Act would provide an opportunity for Texas to implement a consolidation plan, if and when federal law allows.

SECTION 2. Amends Subtitle B, Title 4, Labor Code, by adding Chapter 319, as follows:

#### **CHAPTER 319. TASK FORCE ON CONSOLIDATION OF WORKFORCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

Sec. 319.001. DEFINITION. Defines "task force."

Sec. 319.002. TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP; COMPENSATION. (a) Provides that the task force consists of:

- (1) three members appointed by the governor;

(2) three members appointed by the lieutenant governor; and

(3) three members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

(b) Requires that a vacancy on the task force be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(c) Provides that members of the task force serve without compensation or reimbursement for expenses.

Sec. 319.003. TASK FORCE DUTIES. (a) Requires the task force to:

(1) develop a plan for best courses of action and a regulatory framework for the consolidation of workforce development programs administered by TWC and social services programs administered by HHSC; and

(2) make recommendations to the legislature regarding the consolidation of programs described by Subdivision (1).

(b) Requires that the consolidation plan developed by the task force:

(1) examine all state resources, including financial, manpower, and technology resources, to determine if those resources are being used effectively and efficiently to achieve the desired outcomes for recipients of the workforce development and social services programs and for the purposes of the programs' intended goals;

(2) identify opportunities for cost savings or reallocations of resources to improve the effectiveness of the programs by streamlining essential functions and eliminating duplicative efforts;

(3) identify potential improvements to child-care data systems in order to streamline child-care data collection as necessary to evaluate the need for and availability of subsidized and unsubsidized child care for recipients of program services;

(4) be designed to improve the delivery of the programs by ensuring that applicants for and recipients of the services provided are better served by having access to a single point of contact case manager for all services sought or received; and

(5) identify the changes to federal law that would be necessary to implement the consolidation plan.

Sec. 319.004. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. Requires TWC and HHSC to provide staff and administrative support as necessary to enable the task force to carry out its duties under this chapter, including by providing:

(1) meeting space;

(2) staff to assist the task force in conducting research and drafting the consolidation plan and related materials; and

(3) funding available from existing resources appropriated to TWC or HHSC to pay for costs associated with the task force's functions.

Sec. 319.005. REPORT TO LEGISLATURE. Requires the task force, not later than December 31, 2024, to prepare and submit to the legislature a report that includes:

- (1) a description of the activities of the task force;
- (2) the consolidation plan developed by the task force; and
- (3) the findings and recommendations of the task force.

Sec. 319.006. EXPIRATION. Provides that the task force is abolished and this chapter expires September 1, 2025.

SECTION 3. Requires the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives to appoint the members of the task force as required by Section 319.002, Labor Code, as added by this Act, not later than January 1, 2024.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2023.