

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2891
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Health & Human Services
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Healthcare Workforce Taskforce, hosted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, examined the statewide shortage of health care professionals. It developed recommendations to expand healthcare programs at institutions and provide students with the tools to succeed in health-related careers. Healthcare workforce development in Texas is currently managed by 15 state agencies, boards, chambers of commerce, industry groups, and local partners. The existing model has produced gaps in coordination and outcome disparities across the state. Some regions have robust collaborative training models. Some struggle to keep up with demand.

S.B. 2891 creates the Statewide Health Professions Workforce Coordinating Council (HPWCC). The HPWCC will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the health professions workforce, yielding the most accurate recommendations and projections for future health system needs. The HPWCC is modeled after the existing Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council and will replace the Statewide Healthcare Coordination Council. S.B. 2891 will bring together all 15 state agencies to participate in the planning, education, and preparation of the healthcare workforce and create a biennial Statewide Health Professions Workforce Blueprint (Blueprint) to plan and dedicate resources toward healthcare workforce needs. The Blueprint will include an inventory of all programs and services available for the preparation and education of health professionals.

As proposed, S.B. 2891 amends current law relating to the establishment of the Health Professions Workforce Coordinating Council and the abolition of the statewide health coordinating council and the nursing advisory committee of that council.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is modified in SECTION 7 (Section 61.9647, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the state health coordinating council is rescinded in SECTION 13 (Section 104.012, Health and Safety Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission is rescinded in SECTION 13 (Section 104.042, Health and Safety Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle E, Title 2, Health and Safety Code, by adding Chapter 104A, as follows:

CHAPTER 104A. HEALTH PROFESSIONS WORKFORCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Sec. 104A.001. DEFINITION. Defines "council."

Sec. 104A.002. ESTABLISHMENT; ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACHMENT. (a) Provides that the Health Professions Workforce Coordinating Council (council) is

established to study and develop a strategic approach for ensuring a thriving health care system and health professions workforce in this state.

(b) Provides that the council is administratively attached to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Requires DSHS to provide administrative support to the council.

Sec. 104A.003. MEMBERSHIP. (a) Provides that the council is composed of certain persons.

(b) Provides that a council member serves at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

(c) Requires that a vacancy on the council be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

Sec. 104A.004. DUTIES. Requires the council to:

(1) compile from each state agency with a representative appointed to the council under Section 104A.003(a)(1) (relating to providing that the council include representatives appointed by certain state agencies) certain information regarding the health professions workforce;

(2) prepare the strategic plan described by Section 104A.005; and

(3) establish the work group described by Section 104A.006.

Sec. 104A.005. STRATEGIC PLAN. (a) Requires the council to examine the health professions in this state based on the information compiled under Section 104A.004(1) and biennially prepare a health professions strategic plan. Requires that the plan meet certain requirements.

(b) Requires the council, not later than October 1 of each even-numbered year, to complete and publish on the council's Internet website the strategic plan described by Subsection (a).

Sec. 104A.006. WORK GROUP. (a) Requires the council to establish a work group to examine the health professions and health care education programs that provide a gateway into a variety of health professions. Provides that the work group consists of members of the council or their designees.

(b) Requires that the work group identify sources for gathering information on gateway health professions and build a data analysis model to monitor the historical growth of gateway health professions.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 56.3075(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), if the money available for TEXAS grants in a period for which grants are awarded is sufficient to provide grants to all eligible applicants in amounts specified by Section 56.307 (Grant Amount), to use any excess money available for TEXAS grants to award a grant in an amount not more than three times the amount that may be awarded under Section 56.307 to a student who meets certain criteria, including who is enrolled in a program that fulfills the educational requirements for licensure or certification by the state in a health care profession that the coordinating board, in consultation with the Texas Workforce Commission and DSHS, rather than the statewide health coordinating council (SHCC), has identified as having a critical shortage in the number of license holders needed in this state.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 56.4075(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 61.9641, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 61.9641. New heading: DEFINITION. Defines "clinical site." Deletes existing text defining "nursing advisory committee."

SECTION 5. Amends Section 61.9642(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 61.9646(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 7. Amends Section 61.9647, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 61.9647. RULES. Requires THECB, rather than THECB in collaboration with the nursing advisory committee (committee), to adopt rules for the administration of the grant programs established under Subchapter Z-1 (Grant Programs Supporting Nursing Education and Training), Chapter 61 (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board).

SECTION 8. Amends Sections 32.046(c) and (d), Health and Safety Code, as follows:

(c) Deletes existing text requiring the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to coordinate with SHCC in developing the postpartum depression strategic plan.

(d) Makes a conforming change to this subsection.

SECTION 9. Amends Sections 32.047(d) and (e), Health and Safety Code, to make conforming changes.

SECTION 10. Amends Section 105.001(2), Health and Safety Code, to redefine "council."

SECTION 11. Amends Section 105.002(b), Health and Safety Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the council, rather than the council in conjunction with the committee formed under Section 104.0155 (Nursing Advisory Committee), to avoid duplication of effort, and to the extent funding is available through fees collected under Section 301.155(c) (relating to a surcharge to renew a nursing license), Occupations Code, to establish a nursing resource section within the center for the collection and analysis of educational and employment trends for nurses in this state.

SECTION 12. Amends Section 222.022(2), Health and Safety Code, to redefine "health care facility."

SECTION 13. Repealer: Chapter 104 (Statewide Health Coordinating Council and State Health Plan), Health and Safety Code.

Repealers: Sections 105.011(c) (relating to requiring the committee to serve in an advisory capacity for the workplace violence prevention grant program) and 311.033(d) (relating to providing that a hospital that does not submit certain data to DSHS is subject to civil penalties), Health and Safety Code.

SECTION 14. (a) Provides that, on the effective date of this Act, the following are abolished:

- (1) SHCC established under Subchapter B (Statewide Health Coordinating Council), Chapter 104 (Nursing Advisory Committee), Health and Safety Code, and SHCC member terms expire; and
- (2) the committee established under Section 104.0155, Health and Safety Code, and the committee member terms expire.

(b) Provides that, on the effective date of this Act, any appropriation to and any unexpended, unobligated funds of SHCC or the committee is an appropriation to DSHS for purposes of establishing and providing administrative support to the council. Provides that DSHS and the council assume all obligations, property, rights, and duties of SHCC and the committee.

SECTION 15. (a) Requires the appropriate entities, not later than October 1, 2025, to designate members of the council established under Chapter 104A, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

(b) Requires the council established under Chapter 104A, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, not later than October 1, 2026, to publish its initial strategic plan as required by Section 104A.005, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 16. Effective date: September 1, 2025.