

By: Leo Wilson

H.B. No. 5251

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to excused absences from public school for certain students to attend mental health care appointments.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 25.087(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) A school district shall excuse a student from attending school for:

(1) the following purposes, including travel for those purposes:

(A) observing religious holy days;

(B) attending a required court appearance;

(C) appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;

(D) taking part in a United States naturalization oath ceremony;

(E) serving as an election clerk; or

(F) if the student is in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services, participating, as determined and documented by the department, in an activity:

(i) ordered by a court under Chapter 262 or 263, Family Code, provided that it is not practicable to schedule the participation outside of school hours; or

(ii) required under a service plan under Subchapter B, Chapter 263, Family Code;

(2) a temporary absence resulting from an appointment with health care professionals, including mental health professionals, for the student or the student's child if the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment; or

(3) an absence resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes the student's attendance infeasible, if the student or the student's parent or guardian provides a certification from a physician licensed to practice medicine in this state specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of the student's absence relating to the illness or related treatment.

SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2025.