

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 77
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Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Domestic violence is a continuing problem that affects the state's legal and public health care systems. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has estimates that intimate partner violence costs the nation billions of dollars each year, with most of the costs resulting from medical and mental health services. Recently, the annual reported total of family violence incidents in Texas reached nearly 200,000, representing a sizable increase from previous years. The majority of victims whose sex is known are female, and this gender disparity prompted the implementation by the City of Dallas of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program in an effort to combat these figures. Citing a decrease in aggravated assault charges and an increase in the likelihood that victims will speak out after the program's launch, interested parties believe that this innovative program could act as a model for best practices in the struggle to end domestic violence in Texas.

H.B. 77 seeks to provide for a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program to determine if the program or its components should be reproduced statewide or in additional local communities or school districts.

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

ANALYSIS

H.B. 77 requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to conduct a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program implemented by the City of Dallas to address domestic violence to determine if any or all aspects of the program should be implemented at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts. The bill requires the study to examine each aspect of the program, to evaluate the effectiveness of each aspect of the program in reducing incidents of family violence based on certain specified indicators, to assess the costs associated with the program and sources of funding, to determine the feasibility of implementing one or more aspects of the program at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts, and to make recommendations to the legislature regarding implementation of any or all aspects of the program at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts.

H.B. 77 requires the Department of Family and Protective Services and each other health and human services agency under the authority of HHSC to participate in the study and provide appropriate assistance at the request of HHSC. The bill requires the Texas Education Agency to

cooperate with HHSC as necessary to enable HHSC to assess the feasibility of implementing any or all aspects of the program in school districts. The bill requires HHSC, not later than December 1, 2016, to submit a report to the legislature regarding the results of the study and HHSC recommendations regarding expanded implementation of the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.