

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1708
By: Huffman
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Federal authorities have estimated that over 100,000 children in the United States are exploited by the human trafficking industry each year. Interested parties point out that sex trafficking victims who are minors are unlike any other crime victims because of the intense trauma these victims experience. The parties emphasize that these victims need comprehensive services that include immediate medical care and other services when they are rescued but express concern that there is not currently a statewide organization or government office providing sexually exploited minors with the comprehensive care and services they need. S.B. 1708 seeks to establish a program that provides these comprehensive services to victims of child sex trafficking.

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

S.B. 1708 amends the Government Code to require the governor, as soon as practicable and not later than December 1, 2016, to establish and implement a program to provide comprehensive, individualized services to address the rehabilitation and treatment needs of child sex trafficking victims. The bill requires the governor to appoint a director of the program to serve at the pleasure of the governor. The bill requires the director of the program to coordinate with state and local law enforcement agencies, state agencies, and service providers to identify victims of child sex trafficking who are eligible to receive services under the program. The bill requires the program, for each victim of child sex trafficking identified by the director, to immediately facilitate the assignment of a caseworker to the victim to coordinate with local service providers to create a customized package of services to fit the victim's immediate and long-term rehabilitation and treatment needs. The bill requires services provided under the program to address all aspects of a victim's medical, psychiatric, psychological, safety, and housing needs.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.