

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1693
By: Lucio
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerned stakeholders contend that efforts by the state to address the needs of elderly Texans with visual impairments are inadequate. S.B. 1693 addresses this concern by directing the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee to determine the appropriate level of independent living services for the growing number of seniors in Texas with visual impairment and to make recommendations on the provision of services to such persons.

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. 1693 requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to direct the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee to assist HHSC to determine the appropriate level of independent living services for the growing number of seniors in Texas with visual impairment and make recommendations on the provision of services to such seniors. The bill authorizes the advisory committee, in implementing its duties under the bill's provisions, to meet by telephone conference call, videoconference, or other similar telecommunication method and establishes that a meeting held by such a telecommunication method is subject to specified state open meeting law requirements regarding a meeting held by telephone conference call. The bill requires the advisory committee to conduct a study to determine the projected growth and geographic distribution of seniors with a visual impairment in the next five to 10 years and methods for improving and expanding services, including independent living services, to those seniors and sets out the requirements of the study. The bill requires the advisory committee to develop, in collaboration with private entities and other organizations that assist individuals with a visual impairment, methods to publicize the services available to seniors with a visual impairment. The bill authorizes HHSC to solicit and accept funding for and contract with a private entity for implementing an advisory committee recommendation regarding such publicity methods and requires the recommendations to be in the form of a new initiative, an immediate proposed regulatory change by a state agency, a proposed statutory amendment, or a suggested funding level. The bill requires the advisory committee to develop and submit a written report on the study, publicity methods, and recommendations developed by the advisory committee to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature not later than November 1, 2018. The bill expires June 1, 2019.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2017.