

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2039
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Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Despite great strides in the effort to combat human trafficking and sexual abuse in recent years, interested parties explain that these problems stubbornly persist, as it is difficult and resource-intensive to prevent such incidents from recurring. These parties suggest that more attention should be given to providing age-appropriate early intervention and prevention practices to more effectively overcome these problems. S.B. 2039 seeks to address this issue by providing for the inclusion of human trafficking and sexual abuse instruction in a school district's health curriculum.

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. 2039 amends the Education Code to require the commissioner of education, in cooperation with the human trafficking prevention task force and any other persons the commissioner considers appropriate, to develop one or more sexual abuse and sex trafficking instructional modules that a public school district may use in the district's health curriculum. The bill authorizes these modules to include information on the different forms of sexual abuse and assault, sex trafficking, and risk factors for sex trafficking; the procedures for reporting sexual abuse and sex trafficking or suspected sexual abuse or sex trafficking; strategies for sexual abuse and assault prevention and overcoming peer pressure; information on establishing healthy boundaries for relationships, recognizing potentially abusive or harmful relationships, and avoiding high-risk activities; the recruiting tactics of sex traffickers and peer recruiters, including recruitment through the Internet; the legal aspects of sexual abuse and sex trafficking under state and federal law; and the influence of culture and mass media on perceptions of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, including stereotypes and myths about victims and abusers, victim blaming, and the role of language. The bill requires the developed module or modules to emphasize compassion for victims of sexual abuse or sex trafficking and the creation of a positive reentry experience for survivors of sexual abuse or sex trafficking into schools.

S.B. 2039 includes sex trafficking in the policy addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children required to be adopted and implemented by each district and open-enrollment charter school. The bill authorizes a district to collaborate with local law enforcement and outside consultants with expertise in the prevention of sexual abuse and sex trafficking to create the policy and to create a referral protocol for high-risk students.

S.B. 2039 amends the Government Code to postpone the expiration date of statutory provisions relating to the human trafficking prevention task force from September 1, 2017, to September 1, 2019. The bill applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year and takes effect only if a specific appropriation for the implementation of the bill is provided in a general appropriations act of the 85th Legislature.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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