

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1120
By: Lucio
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A recent report by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) task force of border health officials recommended that the state provide additional assistance and training to local public health departments in the border region regarding identifying, preventing, and treating communicable and other diseases, including tuberculosis. It has been noted that not only is the regional incidence of tuberculosis significantly higher than the statewide average but also that the situation is further complicated by local shortages of health care professionals and lack of community awareness. S.B. 1120 seeks to address these issues by requiring DSHS to provide continuing education on this topic to health professionals and other appropriate persons in the region.

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. 1120 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), to the extent funds are available and in collaboration with health authorities, local health departments, and public health districts, to provide to community health workers, health professionals, and applicable employees of a local health department or public health district continuing education designed to reduce the incidence of communicable and other diseases in counties adjacent to the international border with Mexico. The bill sets out the topics the continuing education may address. The bill requires DSHS to identify and assess the accessibility of continuing education resources and programs for local health departments in the applicable counties that may provide the continuing education. The bill defines "health professional" and "HIV" and defines "community health worker" by reference.

S.B. 1120 authorizes DSHS to solicit or accept gifts, grants, or donations to fund the continuing education and requires DSHS to collaborate with state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, public and private hospitals, public institutions of higher education, and the private sector to identify, apply for, and solicit sources of funding for the continuing education. DSHS is required to implement the bill's provisions only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, DSHS may, but is not required to, implement those provisions using other available appropriations.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.