

SUBJECT: Social study of prospective adoptive parents

COMMITTEE: Juvenile Justice and Family Issues — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 5 ayes — Goodman, Cook, Naishtat, Puente, Van de Putte
1 nays — Brady
3 absent — H. Cuellar, De La Garza, Williamson

WITNESSES: For — Victor Negron; Shannon Noble, Texas Women’s Political Caucus
Against — None

DIGEST: CSHB 1109 would require a social study in all prospective adoptions, including private adoptions. This social study would have to include a complete investigation of the circumstances and conditions of the home of the person petitioning for adoption.

Costs for the social study would be required to be paid by the person seeking to adopt the child.

This act would take effect on September 1, 1995.

SUPPORTERS SAY: CSHB 1109 is one of the recommendations of an interim study relating to improving adoption proceedings. Social studies are important to ensure that adopted children are placed in homes with families that provide healthy, nurturing environments. CSHB 1109 would give the court one more tool to determine the suitability of individuals as adoptive parents.

OPPONENTS SAY: Social studies should not be mandated by the Legislature in instances of private adoptions. Decisions about private adoptions should be left to the parties participating in the adoption.

NOTES: The committee substitute added a provision providing that the person seeking to adopt a child pay for the required social study.