

SUBJECT: Grants for community organizations that support long-term care.

COMMITTEE: Human Services — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Naishtat, Chavez, J. Davis, Noriega, Raymond, Villarreal, Wohlgemuth

0 nays

2 absent — Ehrhardt, Telford

WITNESSES: For — Bruce Bower, Texas Senior Advocacy Coalition; Martha Moyer; *Registered but did not testify:* Susan Jones, Texas Hospital Association; Bob Kafka, ADAPT of Texas; Linda Rushing, Texas Catholic Conference

Against — Evelyn Cherry; *Registered but did not testify:* Fred Snyder

On — Pat Devin, Health and Human Services Commission

BACKGROUND: Government Code, sec. 531.02481, directs the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Texas Department on Aging (DoA) to assist communities in developing community-based support and service delivery systems for long-term care services.

Community-based organizations can include area agencies on aging, independent living centers, municipalities, and local mental health or mental retardation authorities.

DIGEST: CSHB 1154 would direct DHS and DoA to make grants available to community-based organizations for the purpose of developing community-based support and service delivery systems for long-term care services. Proposals would be evaluated based on demonstrated need and merit, but priority would have to be given to organizations that intended to use information technologies for referral, needs assessment, and other information. A condition of the grant would be the requirement of local matching funds. A grant award also could be contingent upon an

organization's good faith efforts to coordinate with other entities to accomplish the purposes of the grant.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2001.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 1154 would give DHS and DoA the authority they need to award grants to community-based organizations that provide long-term care support services. Many community-based organizations offer local long-term care support services including information and referral, donated personal items, case management services, activities, among others. Under current law, DHS and DoA must help develop a plan, but cannot give any money to implement it.

Grants are needed to support the efforts of local communities to coordinate services for clients. The state offers many services to the elderly and disabled, but they often are fragmented and difficult to access. Community-based organizations would help the elderly or disabled to find the services they need and would fill-in with services that the state did not provide.

The grant match would ensure that communities were supportive of the program. The state would provide grants only if the community organization matched the funds.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 1154 would exclude some organizations that supported the same population. Because only local organizations with a focus on community could receive grants, the organizations that supported individuals in institutions would not be able to take advantage of this funding even though they represented the same population of elderly or disabled people.

NOTES:

The companion bill, SB 35 by Zaffirini was referred to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services, where it was left pending on March 19.

According to the fiscal note, this bill could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds totaling \$4.5 million in fiscal 2002-03.