

- SUBJECT:** Creation of a statewide autism spectrum disorders resource center
- COMMITTEE:** Human Services — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Rose, S. King, J. Davis, Herrero, Hughes, Naishtat, Parker  
0 nays  
2 absent — Eissler, Pierson
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ted Melina Raab, Texas Federation of Teachers; Jodie Smith, Texans Care for Children; Rona Statman, The ARC of Texas)  
  
Against — None  
  
On — Margaret Cowen, Texas Council on Autism and PPD; Colleen Horton, Texas Center for Disability Studies; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Frank McCamant, Texas Council on Autism and PPD)
- BACKGROUND:** Autism and other pervasive developmental disorders are mental disorders characterized by distortions in the development of multiple, basic psychological functions involving social and language skill development. The Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders was created in 1987 to make recommendations to state agencies and the Legislature to address the needs of and coordinate resources for persons with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders and their families.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1984 would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish an autism spectrum disorders resource center to coordinate resources for individuals with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders and their families. In establishing and administering the center, the HHSC would consult with the Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders and coordinate with appropriate state agencies.  
  
The HHSC would have to design the center to:

- collect and distribute information and research regarding autism and other pervasive developmental disorders;
- conduct training and development activities for persons who could interact with an individual with autism or another pervasive developmental disorder in the course of their employment;
- coordinate with local entities that provided services to an individual with autism or another pervasive developmental disorder; and
- provide support for families affected by autism and other pervasive developmental disorders.

CSHB 1984 would take effect September 1, 2007.

**NOTES:**

The companion bill, SB 1585 by Gallegos, is scheduled for a May 8 public hearing by the Health and Human Services Committee.