

- SUBJECT:** Allowing children to receive DB-MD waiver program support services
- COMMITTEE:** Human Services — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Rose, Herrero, Darby, Elkins, Hernandez, Hughes, Legler, Naishtat, Walle
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Robbie Caldwell, Melanie Knapp, Richard Newton, Stephen Schoen, Deaf Blind Multihandicapped Association of Texas; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Bruce Bower; Dawn Choate, the Arc of Texas; Susan Murphree, Advocacy, Incorporated)
- Against — None
- On — Michelle Dionne-Vahalik. Adelaide Horn, Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)
- BACKGROUND:** The Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DB-MD) waiver program is one of the five waiver programs serving individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. DB-MD serves individuals who are deaf and blind with multiple disabilities.
- Of the five waiver programs serving individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, all offer services to children as well as adults, except the DB-MD waiver program, which is limited to adults.
- DIGEST:** HB 166 would amend the Human Resources Code to require the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) to provide home- and community-based services under the DB-MD waiver program without regard to an individual's age, if the individual applied for and was otherwise eligible for services.
- The bill would not prevent the department from establishing an age requirement with respect to other programs or services offered to individuals who are deaf-blind and have multiple disabilities.

The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) would, as soon as possible after the effective date of the bill, apply for and pursue an amendment to the state's DB-MD waiver, or other federal authorization, regarding individuals who are younger than 18 years of age. DADS could delay implementing provisions of the bill until the amendment or other authorization was granted. The executive commissioner would adopt rules regarding implementing the bill as soon as possible after obtaining the amendment or other authorization.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.