

SUBJECT: Expanding the purpose and duties of Council on Children and Families

COMMITTEE: Public Health — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Kolkhorst, Naishtat, Alvarado, S. Davis, Schwertner, Zerwas

0 nays

2 present not voting — Coleman, V. Gonzales

3 absent — S. King, Laubenberg, Truitt

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 31-0

WITNESSES: For — Michael Gutierrez

Against — None

BACKGROUND: In 2009, the 81st Legislature enacted SB 1646 by Van de Putte, creating the Council on Children and Families to help improve the coordination of state services for children. The council includes the executive leadership from health and human services agencies, juvenile justice agencies, the Texas Education Agency, the Workforce Commission, and four representatives from the general public. The council is administratively attached to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, but is independent in direction.

DIGEST: SB 717 would expand the purposes of the Council on Children and Families to include promoting the sharing of information regarding children and their families among state agencies. The bill would require the council to identify technological methods to ensure the efficient and timely transfer of information among state agencies providing health, education, and human services to children and their families.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2011.