

- SUBJECT:** Expanding a pilot program for certain prekindergarten programs
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Gooden, K. King, Koop, Meyer, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Dutton
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, May — 22-9 (Birdwell, Burton, Campbell, Creighton, Hall, Hancock, Huffines, Nelson, V. Taylor)
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Jesus Chavez, South Texas Association of Schools; Miranda Goodsheller, Texas Association of Business; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Portia Bosse, Texas State Teachers Association)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Leonardo Lopez and Al McKenzie, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** HB 731 by Lucio, enacted by the 84th Legislature in 2015, created a pilot program to evaluate the benefit of providing additional funding at the prekindergarten level for low-income students. Funding for prekindergarten programs is provided to school districts located in counties that border Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico.
- The prekindergarten program is provided on a half-day basis for the number of low-income prekindergarten students equal to twice the number of students who received, as a result of participation in an early high school graduation program, a high school diploma from the district during the preceding year after completing three years of high school.

Observers suggest that the expansion of the prekindergarten pilot program to the Region 1 Education Service Center, which includes Webb, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Starr, Hidalgo, Willacy, and Cameron counties, would benefit the area.

DIGEST: SB 2270 would expand the pilot program for funding prekindergarten programs provided by certain public schools, changing the participating districts from those located in a county that borders Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico to districts in the regional boundaries of Region 1 Education Service Center.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.