SUBJECT: Increasing the personal needs allowance for certain Medicaid recipients

COMMITTEE: Human Services — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Frank, Hinojosa, Clardy, Klick, Meza, Miller, Noble, Rose

0 nays

1 absent — Deshotel

WITNESSES: For — Amanda Fredriksen, AARP; Mary Pat Smith and Sherry Hubbard, Texas Silver-Haired Legislature; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Anne Dunkelberg, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Dennis Borel, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Alyse Meyer, LeadingAge Texas; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers-Texas Chapter; Jamie Dudensing, Texas Association of Health Plans; Scot Kibbe, Texas Health Care Association; Michelle Romero, Texas Medical Association; Alexis Tatum, Travis County Commissioners Court; Susan Merrick and Rhonda Rogers, Texas Silver-Haired Legislature; Linda Litzinger)

Against — None

On — Gina Carter, Health and Human Services Commission

BACKGROUND: Human Resources Code sec. 32.024(w) requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission to set a personal needs allowance of at least $60 per month for Medicaid recipients who are residents of long-term care facilities.

Concerned parties have noted that the allowance has not increased in several years and have suggested that $60 is no longer sufficient for residents to purchase personal hygiene items, clothing, haircuts, or other needs.

DIGEST: HB 288 would increase the personal needs allowance for Medicaid recipients in long-term care facilities from $60 to $75.

If a state agency determined that a waiver or authorization from a federal agency was necessary for implementation of any provision of the bill, the agency would be required to request the waiver and would be permitted to delay implementation of the waiver or authorization until granted.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019, and would only apply to personal needs allowances paid on or after the effective date.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of $11.2 million to general revenue related funds through fiscal 2020-21.