

**SUBJECT:** Designating June as Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Awareness Month

**COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 10 ayes — S. Thompson, Allison, Coleman, Frank, Guerra, Lucio, Ortega, Price, Sheffield, Zedler

0 nays

1 absent — Wray

**WITNESSES:** For — Diana Mitchell, Alpha Home Inc.; Sophia Casias, Lisa Cleveland, Bexar County NAS Collaborative; John Isaac, Texas Medical Association; Suzie Aldous; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lina Bottomley, Veronica Gibbens, Alpha Home Inc.; Juliana Kerker, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists-Texas District; Cynthia Humphrey, Association of Substance Abuse Programs; Alyssa Thomason, Doctors for Change; Christine Yanas, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas Inc.; Eric Kunish, National Alliance on Mental Illness Austin Affiliate; Alissa Sughrue, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers-Texas Chapter; Adriana Kohler, Texans Care for Children; Michelle Romero, Texas Medical Association; Kaitlyn Doerge, Texas Pediatric Society; Jennifer Lucy, TexProtects; Andrew Smith, University Health System; Carl F. Hunter II; Columba Wilson; Jason Howell)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lisa Ramirez, Texas Health and Human Services Commission)

**DIGEST:** HB 405 would designate June as Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Awareness Month to encourage:

- awareness of the dangers of opioid and substance abuse during pregnancy;

- creation and update of lists of recommended materials to address NAS available through the Department of State Health Services and the Health and Human Services Commission;
- electronic circulation of and posting on state and local agency websites of recommended treatment and recovery resources;
- availability of resources for new and expectant mothers with substance abuse disorders, including health care services and recovery support services; and
- collaboration between state and federal governmental agencies, hospitals, private health care practices, health insurance providers, Medicaid providers, and mental health agencies to increase awareness.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

HB 405 would help to increase public knowledge about Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), a group of conditions caused when babies withdraw from certain drugs they are exposed to before birth. Rates of NAS in Texas increased by more than half from 2010 to 2015. By encouraging dissemination of information on the risks of opioid use during pregnancy and improved access to recovery care resources, this bill would increase awareness of NAS and decrease the stigma that prevents mothers from seeking help.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

No concerns identified.