

SUBJECT: Expanding requirements for school peace and resource officer curriculum

COMMITTEE: Youth Health & Safety, Select — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — S. Thompson, Allison, Dutton, A. Johnson, T. King, Lozano

1 nays — Hull

2 absent — Capriglione, Landgraf

WITNESSES: For — Ana O’Quin, Girls Empowerment Network; Shannon Doyle, National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter; Bill Avera, Texas School District Police Chiefs’ Association (*Registered, but did not testify*); Tricia Cave, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Omodele Ojomo, Autism Society of Texas; Jason Sabo, Children at Risk; Georgia Bates, City of Uvalde; Jolene Sanders, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; David Batton, Harris County Deputies Organization FOP 39; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers’ Union; Hannah Gill, NAMI Texas; Nancy Humphrey, Plano Independent School District; Mark Reynolds, Sheriffs’ Association of Texas; David Feigen, Texans Care for Children; Alejandro Pena, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Colby Nichols, Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Association of Community Schools; Amanda Afifi, Texas Association of School Psychologists; Pamela McPeters, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Leela Rice, Texas Council of Community Centers; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; John Wilkerson, Texas Municipal Police Association; Lauren Rose, Texas Network of Youth Services; Suzi Kennon, Texas PTA; AJ Louderback, Texas Sheriffs Regional Alliance; Elaina Fowler, Texas State Teachers Association; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

On — Shannon Hoffman, The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health (*Registered, but did not testify*; Eric Marin, TEA)

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that school peace officers and resource officers do not have sufficient training to support students with mental health conditions.

DIGEST: HB 4777 would add to the list of learning objectives to be included in curriculum for school peace officers and resource officers the effects of mental health conditions, including grief and trauma, on student behavior and the ways in which using evidence-based, grief-informed, and trauma-informed strategies support a safe school environment and protect the mental health of students.

As soon as practicable after the effective date of the bill, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement would be required to amend the model training curriculum as necessary to implement these changes.

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, 2023.