

SUBJECT: Creating an intellectual and developmental disability coordinating council

COMMITTEE: Human Services — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 8 ayes — Frank, Rose, Campos, Hull, Klick, Manuel, Noble, Ramos
1 nay — Shaheen

WITNESSES: For — Ashley Ford, The Arc of Texas (*Registered, but did not testify*: Dennis Borel, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Jeff Miller, Disability Rights Texas; Michael Dole, Driscoll Health System; Bill Kelly, Mayor's Office City of Houston; Sandra Batton, Providers Alliance for Community Services of Texas; Jessica Lynch, Texas Association of Health Plans; Raif Calvert, Texas Association of School Boards; Isabel Casas, Texas Council of Community Centers and Private Providers Association of Texas; Matt Dowling, Texas Medical Association; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Jon Weizenbaum)

Against — None

On — Clair Benitez, Health and Human Services Commission

DIGEST: CHSB 729 would create a statewide intellectual and developmental disability coordinating council to develop a strategic approach to provide intellectual and developmental disability services.

Duties. The council would be required to develop and monitor the implementation of a five-year statewide intellectual and developmental disability strategic plan. The council would be required to submit the plan to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission and the administrative head of each agency subject to the plan. By November 1 of each even-numbered year, the council would be required to submit a biennial expenditure proposal to the legislature.

The council also would be required to annually publish an updated inventory of state-funded intellectual and developmental disability

programs and services, which would include a description of how the programs and services would further the purpose of the strategic plan and an estimate of the number of individuals waiting for or interested in receiving programs and services.

The council would be allowed to facilitate collaboration for the effective expenditure of federal and state funds for intellectual and developmental disability services.

Strategic and implementation plans. The council would be required to develop a new strategic plan for the next five state fiscal years by March 1 of the last state fiscal year covered by the most recent strategic plan. The council would be required to submit the new plan to the executive commissioner and the administrative head of each agency subject to the plan.

The executive commissioner and each relevant agency would then be required to submit a plan to implement recommendations from the council within 90 days of receiving the plan. If the implementation plan did not include a recommendation from the council, the plan would have to include a justification for declining to implement the recommendation.

The council would be required to prepare the initial strategic plan by March 1, 2025.

Council membership. The council would include at least one representative designated by each of the following entities:

- the Department of State Health Services;
- the Department of Family and Protective Services;
- the Texas Workforce Commission;
- the Texas Education Agency;
- the Texas Center for Disability Studies at the University of Texas at Austin;
- the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University;

- the Texas Department of Criminal Justice; and
- the Commission on Jail Standards.

The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission also would be required to appoint additional representatives from certain entities related to intellectual and developmental services and designate a member of the council to serve as the presiding officer.

Under the bill, council members would serve three year terms. If there was a vacancy, the appropriate authority would appoint a representative in the same way as the original appointment. A council member appointed to fill a vacancy would hold the office until the end of the term.

The appropriate authorities would be required to make appointments to the council by January 31, 2024.

Meetings. The council would be required to meet at least once quarterly or more frequently at the call of the presiding officer. The bill would require that the initial meeting took place by March 1, 2024.

Sunset review. The council would be subject to Sunset review during the same period as the Health and Human Services Commission. Unless continued in statute, the council would be abolished when the Health and Human Services Commission is subject to abolishment.

Effective date. This 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.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 729 would ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to quality and sustainable services by bringing together policy experts, civic leaders, and caregivers to make informed decisions and share critical information. Interagency collaboration would provide legislators, program managers, and caregivers with information to improve services. The statewide coordinating council would be able to identify redundancies in services, which could increase efficiencies and

create savings for the state.

While several councils related to disability services already exist, the council created by CHSB 729 would serve a different function. The statewide coordinating council would be required to develop a five-year statewide strategic plan specifically for intellectual and developmental disability services, annually publish an inventory of state-funded services, and create a biennial expenditure proposal, which are not done by existing councils.

CRITICS
SAY:

A statewide intellectual and developmental disability coordinating council is unnecessary because there are councils related to disability services that already exist, including the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities and the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities.