

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1491
By: Ellis
Finance
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As Filed

DIGEST

The federal Personal Responsibility Act of 1996 requires states to provide 20 hours of work activities for 25 percent of their public assistance recipients in fiscal year 1997. Work participation requirements will increase 5 percent each year until 2002. In five years states must have 50 percent of welfare recipients working at least 30 hours a week--about 88,000 Texans by current enrollment figures.

The federal welfare law defines eligible work activities as unsubsidized employment, subsidized private or public employment, work experience, on-the-job training, job search and job readiness activities, community service programs, vocational education programs, job skills training and satisfactory attendance of secondary school (for recipients who have not completed high school).

S.B. 1491 establishes the self-sufficiency fund for use by public community colleges, technical colleges and community-based organizations to develop job-training programs for certain recipients of public assistance. In addition, this bill requires the programs to be specifically designed to enable the recipients of public assistance to find and apply for existing jobs.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1491 creates the self-sufficiency fund for use by public community and technical colleges and community-based organizations as start-up or emergency funds to develop customized job-training programs for certain recipients of financial assistance.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Workforce Commission under SECTION 1 (Section 308.002, Labor Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Title 4B, Labor Code, by adding Chapter 308, as follows:

Sec. 308.001. SELF-SUFFICIENCY FUND. Provides that, subject to the availability of funds, the self-sufficiency fund is created outside the state treasury for use by public community and technical colleges and community-based organizations as start-up or emergency funds to develop customized job-training programs for certain recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 31, Human Resources Code. Requires the programs to be specifically designed to enable the recipients to find and apply for existing jobs. Requires the Texas Workforce Commission (commission) to administer the self-sufficiency fund. Provides that the executive director, or a person appointed by the executive director who is knowledgeable in the administration of grants, is responsible for the distribution of money from the fund. Requires, to the greatest extent possible, money from the self-sufficiency fund to be spent in all areas of the state. Defines "community-based organization."

Sec. 308.002. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY. Requires the commission to adopt rules to implement this chapter, including rules to determine which recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, are eligible to participate in job-training programs developed with money from the self-sufficiency fund.

SECTION 2. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.