

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R12988 TAD-D

H.B. 1297
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Government Organization
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Costly diseases such as diabetes, congestive heart failure, and hypertension often result from unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, overeating, and physical inactivity. Current state employee wellness programs do not include the components necessary to reduce health care related costs and encourage healthy behavior. Most state agencies lack the staff, expertise, and funds to offer a broad and effective wellness program.

H.B. 1297 requires the Department of State Health Services to designate a wellness coordinator to develop a model wellness program and to assist state agencies with wellness initiatives.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 4 (Section 664.052, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 664, Government Code, by designating Sections 664.001 through 664.006 as Subchapter A and adding a subchapter heading, to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER A. STATE EMPLOYEES HEALTH FITNESS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SECTION 2. Amends Section 664.001, Government Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 664.003, Government Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Amends Chapter 664, Government Code, by adding Subchapter B, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER B. STATE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

Sec. 664.051. DEFINITIONS. Defines "executive commissioner," "department," "state agency," and "state employee."

Sec. 664.052. RULES. Requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to adopt rules for the administration of this subchapter.

Sec. 664.053. CREATION OF MODEL PROGRAM; DESIGNATION OF COORDINATOR. (a) Requires the Department of State Health Services to designate a statewide wellness coordinator (coordinator) to create and develop for use by state agencies a model statewide wellness program to improve the health and wellness of state employees. Authorizes the wellness program to include certain content as set forth in this section.

(b) Requires the coordinator to coordinate with other agencies that administer a health benefits program under Chapter 1551 (Texas Employees Group Benefits Act), Insurance Code, as necessary to develop the model wellness program, prevent duplication of efforts, provide information and resources to employees, and encourage the use of wellness benefits included in the health benefits program.

(c) Authorizes the coordinator to consult with a state agency operating health care programs on matters relating to wellness promotion.

(d) Requires a state agency to designate an employee to serve as the wellness liaison between the agency and the statewide wellness coordinator.

(e) Authorizes a state agency to implement a wellness program based on the model program or components of the model program developed under this section.

(f) Authorizes the coordinator to assist a state agency in establishing employee wellness demonstration projects that incorporate best practices for encouraging employee participation and the achievement of wellness benefits. Authorizes a wellness program demonstration project to implement strategies to optimize the return of state investment in employee wellness, including savings in direct health care costs and savings from preventing conditions and diagnoses through better employee wellness.

SECTION 5. Requires the executive commissioner to adopt rules under Subchapter B, Chapter 664, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than January 1, 2008.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2007.