

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

C.S.H.B. 3571  
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Health & Human Services  
5/18/2007  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The food stamp program provides crucial support to those families making the transition from welfare to work. Currently in Texas, only 50 percent of those who are eligible are enrolled in the program. This equates to approximately two million Texans that are not receiving these fully federally funded benefits. If enrollment was increased to 70 percent, not only would it drive hundreds of millions of new federal dollars into the economy, it would relieve some of the burden on health care programs, such as Medicaid, which is partially state funded.

C.S.H.B. 3571 requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish a pilot program under which a private retail business and authorizes HHSC to enter into an agreement for the purpose of increasing outreach efforts and eligibility determinations for the food stamp program.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 531.066, Government Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, by adding Section 531.066, as follows:

Sec. 531.066. FOOD STAMP PROGRAM OUTREACH AND ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop and implement a pilot program in the South Texas region under which a private retail business that provides services related to the food stamp program administered under Chapter 33 (Nutritional Assistance Programs), Human Resources Code, enters into an agreement with HHSC to support outreach efforts and eligibility determinations for that program.

(b) Authorizes an agreement between a private retail business participating in the pilot program and HHSC, subject to state and federal laws governing the food stamp program, to require the business to provide specific informational materials, perform outreach services, as determined by HHSC, and provide space at the retail locations of the business to perform certain pilot program functions.

(b-1) Authorizes an agreement between a private retail business participating in the pilot program and HHSC to authorize the business to implement strategies to encourage recipients of food stamps who are also Medicaid recipients to engage in healthy behaviors, and authorize the business to provide incentives to recipients described by this section who are children younger than 21 years of age to make timely health care visits under the early and periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment program.

(c) Authorizes the executive commissioner of HHSC, in developing the pilot program, to develop rules regarding the requirements applicable to a private retail business that participates in the program.

(d) Requires HHSC, not later than December 1, 2008, to submit a report to the legislature that includes an evaluation of and certain recommendations for the pilot program.

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2009.

SECTION 2. Requires a state agency, if before implementing any provision of this Act the agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision, to request the waiver or authorization, and authorizes the agency to delay implementing that provision until the waiver or authorization is granted.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2007.