

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 769
By: Uresti
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Foster children often come from troubled homes where they may have been forced to endure traumatic experiences, often induced by the very people who should be caring for them. Some children experience more extreme levels of trauma, which can have negative effects that linger long after these children are removed from those troubling environments, and as a result, these children will often act out in foster care settings. The average foster family does not have the knowledge to address these behaviors.

S.B. 769 provides for a pilot program in Bexar County whereby foster families receive specialized training as part of wraparound services. The bill directs the Department of Family and Protective Services to collaborate with local government and local charities to provide this training at no cost to the state. These families have made the unselfish decision to foster these victimized children, and S.B. 769 seeks to provide them with the necessary tools and resources for a successful foster child placement to the benefit of all parties involved.

As proposed, S.B. 769 amends current law relating to the establishment of a pilot program to provide specialized training to foster parents of certain children.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, by adding Section 264.124, as follows:

Sec. 264.124. FOSTER PARENT PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to establish a pilot program to provide specialized training to foster parents of children who have been traumatized or have serious mental health needs if DFPS or another state agency is able to provide the training using existing resources or a local governmental entity or charitable organization is able to provide the training at no cost to the state.

(b) Requires DFPS to:

- (1) establish the pilot program in a county with a population of at least 1.5 million that is within 200 miles of an international border;
- (2) coordinate the specialized training as part of community-based services and support provided under a wraparound individualized planning process for foster children as prescribed by the Texas Integrated Funding Initiative Consortium; and
- (3) evaluate the pilot program not later than the second anniversary of the date the program is established.

(c) Requires DFPS to prepare a report containing the evaluation required under Subsection (b)(3) and DFPS's recommendations on the feasibility and continuation of the pilot program. Requires DFPS to submit electronically a copy of the report to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives not later than December 1, 2016.

(d) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2017.

SECTION 2. Requires DFPS, not later than May 1, 2014, to establish the pilot program required under Section 264.124, Family Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2013.