

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R1846 KKA-D

H.B. 77
By: González, Mary et al. (West)
Health & Human Services
5/1/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Domestic violence is a continuing problem that affects the state's legal and public health care systems. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that intimate partner violence costs the nation billions of dollars each year, with most of the costs resulting from medical and mental health services. Recently, the annual reported total of family violence incidents in Texas reached nearly 200,000, representing a sizable increase from previous years. The majority of victims whose sex is known are female, and this gender disparity prompted the implementation by the City of Dallas of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program in an effort to combat these figures. Citing a decrease in aggravated assault charges and an increase in the likelihood that victims will speak out after the program's launch, interested parties believe that this innovative program could act as a model for best practices in the struggle to end domestic violence in Texas.

H.B. 77 seeks to provide for a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program to determine if the program or its components should be reproduced statewide or in additional local communities or school districts.

H.B. 77 amends current law relating to a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program.

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. STUDY REQUIRED. Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to conduct a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program (program) implemented by the City of Dallas to address domestic violence to determine if any or all aspects of the program should be implemented at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts.

SECTION 2. CONTENTS OF STUDY. Requires that the study:

- (1) examine each aspect of the program;
- (2) evaluate the effectiveness of each aspect of the program in reducing incidents of family violence, based on indicators such as the number of calls made to domestic violence hotlines, the number of victims of family violence who participate in prosecution of offenses involving family violence, and the number of aggravated assault charges filed in family violence cases;
- (3) assess the costs associated with the program and sources of funding;
- (4) determine the feasibility of implementing one or more aspects of the program at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts; and

(5) make recommendations to the legislature regarding implementation of any or all aspects of the program at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts.

SECTION 3. AGENCY PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION. Requires the Department of Family and Protective Services and each other health and human services agency under the authority of HHSC to participate in the study and provide appropriate assistance at the request of HHSC. Requires the Texas Education Agency to cooperate with HHSC as necessary to enable HHSC to assess the feasibility of implementing any or all aspects of the program in school districts.

SECTION 4. REPORT. Requires HHSC to submit a report to the legislature regarding the results of the study and HHSC's recommendations regarding expanded implementation of the program not later than December 1, 2016.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.