

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R171 EAS-F

S.B. 184
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Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Over 30 million people in the United States suffer from an eating disorder. Ninety-five percent of those with eating disorders are between the ages of 12 and 25, including almost one million under the age of 18. Within the last decade the trend has only worsened, with an 119 percent increase in the number of children under 12 admitted to a hospital for an eating disorder. Additionally, preliminary research conducted during the pandemic indicates that the stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19 have significantly exacerbated symptoms of eating disorder illnesses across the country and will have long-term implications.

The impact of eating disorders is catastrophic, with a higher mortality rate than all other mental illnesses combined. One person dies from an eating disorder every 62 minutes and those who suffer from this condition are 12 times more likely to commit suicide.

While eating disorders are life-threatening mental illnesses, they are treatable; patients recover at high rates if intervention is early and intensive. Unfortunately, more than 70 percent of those who suffer from eating disorders will not seek treatment due to stigma, misperceptions, lack of education, and access to care. Enhanced investigative and research efforts can improve eating disorder prevention and inform the development of strategies to address the needs of populations living with eating disorder illnesses.

S.B. 184 seeks to address this issue by directing the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission, to study and prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders in Texas. The study will provide an overview of state-funded treatment options and recommend legislative action. DSHS will also have the authority to accept gifts and grants to fund expenses incurred by the study.

As proposed, S.B. 184 amends current law relating to reports on the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in this state.

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. (a) Requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), to prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas. Requires that the report include regional and statewide statistics regarding the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas, an overview of national trends in eating disorders, and an overview of state-funded behavioral health treatment options available to persons with eating disorders.

(b) Requires DSHS to gather information for the report from information collected by DSHS and HHSC, including information from the DSHS vital statistics unit, the state Medicaid program, hospitals, treatment centers, available surveys, and other relevant sources.

(c) Requires DSHS and HHSC, not later than December 1, 2022, to prepare and submit to the legislature a copy of the report and any recommendations for legislative or other action to reduce the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas. Authorizes DSHS to post the report on its Internet website.

(d) Authorizes DSHS to accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to fund expenses incurred in preparing the report.

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. (a) Requires DSHS to prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders among youth in Texas. Authorizes DSHS, when administering the Youth Risk Behavior Survey created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to youth in Texas, to include additional questions as necessary to assist DSHS in assessing the prevalence of eating disorders among the youth for purposes of the report.

(b) Requires DSHS, not later than December 1, 2024, to submit to the legislature a copy of the report and a summary of the survey findings relating to the prevalence of eating disorders among youth in Texas. Authorizes DSHS to post the report and summary on its Internet website.

(c) Authorizes DSHS to accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to fund expenses incurred in preparing the report.

(d) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2025.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.