

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 1138  
By: Hughes  
Human Services  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The state and federal governments operate a number of safety net programs aimed at helping eligible individuals in need of financial assistance, including children, families, seniors, and people with disabilities, to pay for basic needs such as food and quality health care. These programs are essential to program recipients' livelihoods and to help Texans who find themselves in difficult situations get back on their feet. As such, it is incumbent on the legislature, on behalf of all Texans, to ensure that the dollars appropriated for these programs are used as wisely as possible to ensure that the programs are carried out efficiently but also in a manner to effectively help recipients achieve self-sufficiency. S.B. 1138 seeks to require the Legislative Budget Board to study the safety net programs available in Texas to determine how best to streamline program eligibility requirements, resources, and services to improve outcomes and reduce costs to taxpayers.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

S.B. 1138 requires the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), in coordination with the Health and Human Services Commission and other applicable state agencies, to conduct a study on state and federal safety net programs available in Texas during the five-year period preceding the bill's effective date for the purpose of streamlining program eligibility requirements, resources, and benefits to improve outcomes for program recipients and reduce costs to taxpayers. The safety net programs to be studied include TANF, SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, CHIP, the child care services program operated by the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

S.B. 1138 prescribes the examination and analyses required to be included in the study and requires the LBB to collect any information necessary for conducting the study from each state agency that administers or operates a safety net program. Each agency must submit the information requested by the LBB to the LBB within a reasonable time as prescribed by the LBB. The bill requires the LBB, not later than September 1, 2022, to submit a report based on its findings and recommendations to the legislature and post the report on its website. The LBB must conduct the study and prepare the report using existing resources. The bill's provisions expire January 1, 2023.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.