

SUBJECT: Required education for child-care providers who transport young children

COMMITTEE: Human Services — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Rose, Herrero, Darby, Hernandez, Legler, Naishtat, Walle

0 nays

2 absent — Elkins, Hughes

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, March 25 — 31-0

WITNESSES: *(On House companion bill, HB 1901:)*

For — Avonda Fox, Jacob Fox's Ladder; Kara Johnson, Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition; Melanie Rubin, Texas Association for Infant Mental Health; *(Registered, but did not testify: Maria Huemmer, The Texas Catholic Conference, The Roman Catholic Bishops of Texas; Diana Martinez, TexProtects; Monica Thyssen, Advocacy, Inc.)*

Against — None

On — Sasha Rasco, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

BACKGROUND: Human Resources Code, sec. 42.042 requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to adopt rules establishing minimum training standards for an employee of a regulated child-care facility.

DIGEST: SB 572 would require DFPS to adopt rules requiring an owner, operator, or employee of a day-care center, group day-care home, family home, child-care institution, or foster group home that transported a child chronologically or developmentally under nine years old to complete at least two hours of annual training on transportation safety.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2009. The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission would have to adopt the required rules by March 1, 2010.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

SB 572 would address an omission in current training requirements for those who care for and transport young children. Current law does not specifically require training regarding safe transportation procedures. Texas is among the leading states in fatalities related to transportation of young children, totaling over 52 from 1998 to 2008. In 2006, for instance, four-year old Jacob Fox died from heat exhaustion in Dallas after being left by a day care owner in a car on a hot day. High turnover rates in the child care industry leave many without adequate knowledge of safety procedures and precautions that are necessary for the safe transport of children.

SB 572 would require necessary initial and continuing education for those involved in transporting young children. The additional requirement would take little time to complete, would not impose significant additional costs, and would supplement existing requirements in current law that do not specifically include a transportation component.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

SB 572 would impose an additional training burden on child-care facilities, which already have significant training requirements. Training takes money and time and could be a hassle in light of the already ample training requirements demanded of child-care employees. If transportation education is important, it should be integrated into existing training requirements.

**NOTES:**

The companion bill, HB 1901 by Branch, was considered in a public hearing and left pending by the House Human Services Committee on April 2.