

**SUBJECT:** Establishing a task force to develop a plan to promote father engagement

**COMMITTEE:** Human Services — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Frank, Hinojosa, Deshotel, Klick, Meza, Miller, Noble, Rose

0 nays

1 absent — Clardy

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, May 1 — 25-6 (Birdwell, Campbell, Creighton, Hancock, Nelson, Schwertner)

**WITNESSES:** For — Lee Nichols, TexProtects-Champions for Safe Children; Patricio Ortiz, The Children's Shelter; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Priscilla Camacho, Dallas Regional Chamber; Greg Hansch, National Alliance on Mental Illness-Texas; Eric Kunish, National Alliance on Mental Illness-Austin; Kate Murphy, Texans Care for Children; Alyssa Jones, Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services; Andrew Homer, Texas CASA; Shellie Ryan, Texas Council on Family Violence; Lauren Rose, Texas Network of Youth Services; Knox Kimberly, Upbring; Cherie Chadwick; Jose Flores; Kimberly Lovejoy)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Sasha Rasco, Department of Family and Protective Services)

**DIGEST:** SB 1130 would establish a task force on father engagement to evaluate services and supports available to fathers in the state, study the impact of father engagement on children, families, and communities in the state, and develop a statewide plan for expanding services available to fathers.

**Duties.** The bill would require the task force to receive reports and testimony from individuals and interested stakeholders regarding father engagement and evidence-based father education programs.

The task force would study the social and economic impact of father engagement on children, including in regard to health care, education, child support, child welfare, and the juvenile justice system,

SB 1130 would require the task force to make recommendations for a statewide plan to expand services and supports to fathers in the state and other strategies to strengthen father engagement, including recommendations for proposed legislation.

**Administration.** The bill would specify the task force's composition and appointment of its presiding officer. Members of the task force would be appointed by the governor and would serve without compensation or reimbursement for travel or other expenses. The Department of Family and Protective Services would be required to provide administrative and technical support to the task force.

**Report.** By September 1, 2020, the task force would have to submit a report on its activities, findings, and recommendations to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the House speaker, and the appropriate legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over DFPS.

The task force would be abolished September 1, 2021.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

SB 1130 would establish a task force on father engagement to work toward ensuring that fathers were engaged with their children and to promote better outcomes for families.

Research indicates that family situations that feature an involved father are linked to better outcomes regarding most measures of a child's well-being. The involvement of a father with his child can result in healthier connections, which serve as a protective factor against maltreatment.

Because the purview of the task force would include making recommendations on both family-related issues and state-related

programs, the task force necessarily would include representatives of both governmental entities and faith-based and charitable actors.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

While SB 1130 seeks to promote a worthy goal this task falls outside the proper role of government and would better be left to churches and charitable organizations, both of which can have lasting impacts and involvement in the lives of families.