

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 951
By: Ellis
Intergovernmental Relations
3-27-97
Committee Report (Amended)

DIGEST

Recently, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (department) has begun to offer ancillary social services—known as "tenant services"—as part of the department's work with its clients. Tenant services are similar to services, such as child care, transportation and adult basic education, that public assistance clients receive to help them become self-sufficient.

Some families who receive tenant services through the department may already receive similar services from other agencies, including the Texas Workforce Commission and the Department of Health. It is believed that increased coordination of tenant services among state agency providers could help Texas service more people with the state's limited federal funds. In addition, if state agencies tracked the type and value of services provided, Texas could draw down more matching federal funds available for those services. For instance, Texas' share of matching funds for child care is nearly \$60 million. Yet, Texas currently draws down a fraction of those funds.

This bill would require the department to coordinate its tenant services programs with similar programs at other state agencies in order to qualify for additional federal matching funds and to serve more clients. Furthermore, S.B. 951 would direct the department to prepare a report to the next regular session of the legislature regarding the results of the department's efforts.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 951 requires the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to structure the requirements for the provision of tenant services so that tenant services provided through housing programs are coordinated with similar services provided through state workforce development and welfare programs. In addition, this bill requires the department to emphasize tenant services that are eligible for additional federal matching funds through workforce development or welfare-related programs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 2306K, Government Code, by adding Section 2306.253, as follows:

Sec. 2306.253. TENANT SERVICES PROGRAM. Defines "tenant services." Requires the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (department) to structure the requirements for the provision of tenant services so that tenant services provided through housing programs are coordinated with similar services provided through state workforce development and welfare programs. Requires the department to emphasize tenant services that are eligible for additional federal matching funds through workforce development or welfare-related programs. Requires the department to designate a department employee as the tenant services program coordinator. Requires the coordinator to serve as a liaison to the Texas Workforce Commission, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, and the Legislative Budget Board on matters relating to the coordination of tenant services programs. Requires the coordinator to meet in Austin at least quarterly with representatives of certain agencies for certain purposes. Requires the

department, not later than December 1 preceding a regular session of the legislature, to file with the appropriate state agencies and legislative committees a report discussing the results of the department's program under this section.

SECTION 2. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

SECTION 1.

Page 1, line 9, strike the word "public."