

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 2683
By: Chisum et al. (Estes)
Health & Human Services
5/2/2007
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, enacted H.B. 2292 that reorganized the delivery of health and human services. Among its many provisions, the bill established the Healthy Marriage Development Program. The program provides instruction on premarital counseling, including anger resolution, family violence prevention, communication, honoring your spouse, and managing a budget; physical fitness and active lifestyles, including sexual abstinence for unmarried and previously married people and nutrition on a budget; and parenting skills for character development, academic success, and stepchildren.

Recipients of assistance through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)--a federal block grant that funds cash assistance and other services for low-income families--who take the courses receive an additional \$20 per course in financial assistance up to \$60.

C.S.H.B. 2683 authorizes the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to provide grants of not more than \$50,000 for programs that provide marriage education services and support the development of healthy marriages or the strengthening of families. The bill requires that a minimum of one percent of federal funds received under TANF are directed to fund such programs each biennium. This bill also requires HHSC to give preference to certain grant applicants, and requires HHSC to require that grant recipients provide program services at no cost to participants.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 31.017, Human Resources Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, by adding Sections 31.017 and 31.018, as follows:

Sec. 31.017. **HEALTHY MARRIAGES AND STRONG FAMILIES GRANT PROGRAM.** (a) Authorizes the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to administer a grant program to provide grants in amounts not to exceed \$50,000 to programs that provide marriage education services and support the development of healthy marriages or strengthening of families (programs). Authorizes grant recipients to use grant money to provide direct services to participants, develop a program, enlarge program capacity, or pay other program expenses, including provider training and technical assistance expenses.

(b) Requires HHSC, in selecting grant recipients, to give preference to certain applicants.

(c) Requires HHSC to require that each grant recipient provide program services at no cost to participants.

(d) Authorizes HHSC to contract with private entities to provide marriage education training and curriculum, technical assistance, and other support to grant recipients. Requires HHSC, in selecting entities to provide these services, to

consider whether a prospective provider has knowledge and understanding of the needs of grant recipients operating programs in different areas of Texas.

(e) Authorizes the executive commissioner of HHSC to adopt rules to implement this section.

Sec. 31.018. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PROGRAM FUNDING. Requires HHSC, to the extent authorized by federal law, to spend a minimum of one percent of money received under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant during each state fiscal biennium to fund programs that support the development of healthy marriages or the strengthening of families, including the healthy marriage development program under Section 31.015 (Healthy Marriage Development Program) and the healthy marriages and strong families grant program under Section 31.017.

SECTION 2. Authorizes a state agency to delay implementing a provision of this Act until a requested federal waiver or authorization necessary to implement that provision is obtained.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2007.