

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 607
By: Hancock
Intergovernmental Relations
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 1995, the 74th Texas legislature established the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless (TICH). The legislation requires TICH to coordinate the state's resources and services to address homelessness. TICH also serves as an advisory committee to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Representatives from 11 state agencies sit on the council along with members appointed by the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives. Portions of state law relating to TICH have not been updated since initial passage of the enabling legislation, which has caused some difficulty in conducting board meetings and providing resources to member agencies.

S.B. 607 updates the membership of TICH to reflect changes to agency names that have been made since 1995, and allows TICH and its member agencies to seek assistance from the Texas Homeless Network if any wish to do so. S.B. 607 also updates language to allow for a member's participation in a meeting by teleconference or other acceptable methods as allowed by the Open Meetings Act.

As proposed, S.B. 607 amends current law relating to the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 2306.903(a), Government Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless (TICH) is composed of:

(1) one representative from each of the following agencies, appointed by the administrative head of that agency:

(A) the Department of State Health Services, rather than the Texas Department of Health;

(B) redesignates existing Paragraph (D) as Paragraph (B);

(C) the Department of Aging and Disability Services, rather than the Texas Department on Aging;

(D) redesignates existing Paragraph (G) as Paragraph (D);

(E) the Department of Family and Protective Services, rather than the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services;

(F) redesignates existing Paragraph (J) as Paragraph (F);

(G) redesignates existing Paragraph (K) as Paragraph (G);

(H) the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, rather than the Texas Youth Commission;

(I) redesignates existing Paragraph (M) as Paragraph (I);

(J) the Department of Assistive and rehabilitative Services;

Deletes a reference to the Texas Department of Human Services, a reference to the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, a reference to the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, and a reference to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

(2) two representatives from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) who are appointed by the executive director of TDHCA (director), including at least one representative whose duties include management or administration of the community services block grant program or the emergency solutions grant program, rather than two representatives from TDHCA, one each from the community affairs division and the housing finance division, appointed by the director of TDHCA; and

(3) Makes no change to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 2306.904(e), Government Code, to require TDHCA to provide clerical and advisory support staff and authorizes TDHCA to provide fiscal support to TICH.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 2306.905, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 2306.905. DUTIES OF COUNCIL. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text and makes no further change.

(b) Authorizes TICH and each of its represented agencies to seek program or policy assistance from the Texas Homeless Network in accomplishing TICH's duties.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 2306.906(b), Government Code, to require each agency to contribute resources to TICH unless the agency certifies in writing that the agency is unable to contribute resources during that fiscal period.

SECTION 5. Amends Subchapter KK, Chapter 2306, Government Code, by adding Section 2306.910, as follows:

Sec. 2306.910. MEETING BY TELECONFERENCE. Provides that only a member of TICH who resides 20 or more miles away from the location of a TICH meeting is authorized to participate remotely in the meeting by telephone conference call, videoconference, or other similar telecommunication method permitted under Chapter 551 (Open Meetings).

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2015.