

**SUBJECT:** Requiring TWC to select an entity to assess quality of child-care providers

**COMMITTEE:** International Relations and Economic Development — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 6 ayes — Button, Morales, Beckley, C. Bell, Metcalf, Ordaz Perez

0 nays

3 absent — Canales, Hunter, Larson

**WITNESSES:** For — Mandi Kimball, Children At Risk; Tom Hedrick, Dillon Joyce Ltd.; Kimberly Kofron, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Charles Cohn, Angels Care and Learning Center; Lyn Lucas, Camp Fire First Texas; Marnie Glaser, Child Care Associates; Christine Wright, City of San Antonio; Libby McCabe, Early Matters and The Commit Partnership; Sandy Dochen, Early Matters Greater Austin; Melanie Rubin, North Texas Early Education Alliance; David Feigen, Texans Care for Children; Stephanie Retherford, Texas Licensed Child Care Association; Jennifer Lucy, TexProtects; Dana Harris, The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Brooke Freeland)

Against — None

On — Reagan Miller, Texas Workforce Commission

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 2308.3155 establishes the Texas Rising Star Program as a voluntary, quality-based rating system of child care providers participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) subsidized child care program. TWC is required to adopt rules to administer the program, including guidelines for rating certain child-care providers and a timeline and process for regularly reviewing and updating quality standards used to determine the rating system.

Sec. 2308.320 requires each local workforce development board to

provide technical assistance to providers in the Texas Rising Star Program and to those seeking program certification. Boards must provide a child development specialist to evaluate a child-care provider during the certification process, a mentor or coach to a provider, and certain kinds of consumer and parenting education information.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 1792 would require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to select a single entity to oversee a statewide roster of qualified assessors to evaluate child-care providers participating in the Texas Rising Star Program during the initial certification process and at any other time during the provider's participation in the program. As soon as practicable after the bill's effective date, TWC would have to select the entity using a competitive procurement process that complied with state and federal laws.

The bill also would remove the requirement that a child development specialist be included in the technical assistance provided by a local workforce development board.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** CSHB 1792 would expand the state's ability to verify the quality of child-care providers and provide consistent, statewide standards by consolidating Texas Rising Star Program evaluators under one entity. Currently, Texas has 28 local workforce development boards, each of which must provide a child development specialist to evaluate child-care providers during the certification process. Multiple evaluators across several regions can create different expectations for providers. Removing this requirement would reduce biases and harmonize expectations for providers. Additionally, consolidating assessors would help ensure protocols were aligned statewide and that ratings reflected a fair and accurate representation of quality.

**CRITICS SAY:** No concerns identified.