

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 551
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Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Estimates indicate that an individual dies from an eating disorder almost every hour, and the prevalence of death in eating disorders is higher than in any other mental health illness. However, eating disorders, which are highly life-threatening mental health illnesses, are treatable, as patients have been able to recover with early and intensive interventions. Unfortunately, it has been noted that roughly 70 percent of those who suffer from an eating disorder do not seek treatment due to the lack of diagnosis, education, and access to care. H.B. 551 seeks to gather information needed to develop resources to improve treatment strategies for Texans with eating disorders by requiring the Department of State Health Services and the Health and Human Services Commission to prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 551 requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), to prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas and, not later than December 1, 2022, to prepare and submit to the legislature a copy of the report and any recommendations for legislative or other action to reduce the prevalence of eating disorders and related deaths in Texas. The bill authorizes DSHS to post the report on its website and requires the report to include the following:

- statewide and regional statistics regarding the prevalence of eating disorders and eating disorder-related deaths in Texas;
- an overview of national trends in eating disorders; and
- an overview of state-funded behavioral health treatment options available to persons with eating disorders.

The bill requires DSHS to gather the required information for the report from information collected by DSHS and HHSC, including information from the vital statistics unit and the Medicaid program, and hospitals, treatment centers, available surveys, and other relevant sources. The bill authorizes DSHS to accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to fund expenses incurred by DSHS in preparing the report. These provisions expire September 1, 2023.

H.B. 551 requires DSHS to prepare a report on the prevalence of eating disorders among youth in Texas. The bill authorizes DSHS, when administering the Youth Risk Behavior Survey created by the CDC to youth in Texas, to include additional questions as necessary to assist DSHS in assessing the prevalence of eating disorders among such youth for purposes of the report. The bill requires DSHS, not later than December 1, 2024, to submit to the legislature a copy of the report and a summary of the survey findings relating to the prevalence of eating disorders among such youth. The bill authorizes DSHS to post the report and summary on its website and to accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to fund expenses it incurs in preparing the report. These provisions expire September 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.