

- SUBJECT:** Creating a program to the advance research on adult stem cells
- COMMITTEE:** State Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Cook, Giddings, Craddick, Farney, Farrar, Geren, Harless, Kuempel, Oliveira, Smithee, Sylvester Turner
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Huberty
- WITNESSES:** For — Rick Hardcastle; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ann Hettinger, Concerned Women for America of Texas; Joe Pojman, Texas Alliance for Life; Jennifer Allmon, the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Stephen (Jay) Maguire; Krista Olson; Kym Olson)
- Against — None
- On — David Bales, Texans for Stem Cell Research
- BACKGROUND:** Adult stem cells, which have been identified in many organs and tissues, are a promising medical therapy for certain degenerative diseases, birth defects, spinal cord injuries, and other medical conditions. These types of stem cells are not derived from embryos.
- Research on adult stem cells already is being conducted across the state at universities and other institutions. Support and coordination from a state entity could further facilitate the progress of this research.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 177 would add a new chapter to the Education Code that would create an adult stem cell research program. The bill would create an Adult Stem Cell Research Consortium and an Adult Stem Cell Research Coordinating Board to carry out and coordinate the research.
- The consortium established by the bill would be composed of participating institutions of higher education and businesses that accepted

money for adult stem cell research or otherwise agreed to participate.

The seven-member Adult Stem Cell Research Coordinating Board would be charged with administering a program to make grants and loans to consortium members for certain activities, including:

- projects to develop therapies, protocols, or medical procedures involving adult stem cells;
- development of facilities to be used solely for stem cell research projects; and
- commercialization of products and technology involving adult stem cell research and treatments.

The bill also would require the board to support consortium members in all stages of the process of developing treatments and cures based on adult stem cell research, from initial laboratory research through clinical trials. The board would establish appropriate regulatory standards and oversight bodies and would provide assistance to consortium members in applying for grants or loans under the program. In addition, the board would develop priorities, guidelines, and procedures for the provision of grants and loans, including requirements that grants and loans be made on a competitive, peer-review basis.

The bill would specify the composition of the coordinating board and the terms of the board members. It also would stipulate that certain persons could not be members of the board due to conflicts of interest.

CSHB 177 would require that the research program be funded through gifts, grants, and donations to be solicited by the consortium and accepted by the board on the consortium's behalf. The program could not be funded by legislative appropriations.

By September 1 of each even-numbered year, the research coordinating board would be required to submit a report of its activities and recommendations to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the House of

Representatives, and the presiding officers of legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education.

CSHB 177 would specify requirements and limitations for the collection of adult stem cells and for their use in health care and hospital settings.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.