

SUBJECT: Requiring uniform guidance for judges in CPS and juvenile cases

COMMITTEE: Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — Leach, Farrar, Y. Davis, Julie Johnson, Krause, Meyer, Neave, Smith, White

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Dennis Borel, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Allison Franklin, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition; Jennifer Lucy, Texprotects; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Tiffany Roper, Department of Family and Protective Services)

BACKGROUND: Some have noted that there can be a lack of uniformity in the way judges handle juvenile and child protective services cases across the state and that judges could benefit from training or experience in responding to issues that impact children.

DIGEST: CSHB 2737 would require the Texas Supreme Court to provide annual guidance to judges who presided over juvenile or child protective services cases to establish greater uniformity across the state for certain issues. The issues would include the placement of children with severe mental health issues; changes in placement; final termination of parental rights; the release of children detained in juvenile detention facilities; certification of juveniles to stand trial as adults; and commitment of children to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

The court would adopt any necessary rules to execute the bill's provisions.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.