

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 290
By: Zaffirini
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, technical assistance for human service providers includes a variety of services and activities designed to help providers understand and comply with the requirements of the programs and contracts in which they participate. Most technical assistance is provided by state agency personnel through myriad printed materials, field visits, and conferences, and is usually organized such that providers receive separate guidance from each program or agency from which they receive funds. As a result, most technical assistance systems suffer from lack of consistency and comprehensiveness. This bill requires the development of an Internet site to allow users to access information about specific local service providers at any time and from almost any location, in an attempt to create a more helpful resource.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 290 requires the Health and Human Services Commission and Department of Information Services to develop an Internet site to provide informational assistance for human services providers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 531A, Government Code, by adding Section 531.013, as follows:

Sec. 531.013. ELECTRONIC AVAILABILITY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (commission) to develop with the Department of Information Resources (department) an Internet site to provide assistance for human services providers. Authorizes the department to provide access to the same or a similar site on any other widely used computer or telecommunications network or service. Authorizes the site to include information on certain subjects. Requires the commission to file a report on the Internet site with the commissioner of health and human services and the heads of the health and human services agencies not later than September 1, 1998. Provides that this subsection expires January 1, 1999.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.