

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
84R25376 KKA-D

C.S.H.B. 77  
By: González, Mary et al. (West)  
Health & Human Services  
5/21/2015  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Domestic violence is a continuing problem that affects the state's legal and public health care systems. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that intimate partner violence costs the nation billions of dollars each year, with most of the costs resulting from medical and mental health services. Recently, the annual reported total of family violence incidents in Texas reached nearly 200,000, representing a sizable increase from previous years. The majority of victims whose sex is known are female, and this gender disparity prompted the implementation by the City of Dallas of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program in an effort to combat these figures. Citing a decrease in aggravated assault charges and an increase in the likelihood that victims will speak out after the program's launch, interested parties believe that this innovative program could act as a model for best practices in the struggle to end domestic violence in Texas.

C.S.H.B. 77 provides for a the Health and Human Services Commission to work with a statewide coalition on family violence to study the Dallas Men Against Abuse program, as well as other activities in the Dallas community addressing family violence, to determine if the program or its components should be reproduced statewide or in additional local communities or school districts.

C.S.H.B. 77 amends current law relating to a study of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program and other activities in the Dallas community addressing family violence.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission" and "program."

SECTION 2. STUDY REQUIRED. (a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), in conjunction with a statewide coalition on family violence, to conduct a study of activities in the Dallas community addressing family violence, with a specific focus on each aspect of the Dallas Men Against Abuse program (program) to determine if any or all of those activities or program aspects should be implemented at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts.

(b) Requires HHSC and the statewide coalition on family violence, in conducting the study, to consult with:

(1) the City of Dallas Domestic Violence Task Force; and

(2) a researcher with expertise on family violence who is affiliated with an institution of higher education in this state.

SECTION 3. CONTENTS OF STUDY. Requires that the study:

- (1) examine each aspect of the program;
- (2) evaluate the effectiveness of each aspect of the program and the effectiveness of other community activities that contributed to changes in community responses to family violence, based on indicators developed in consultation with family violence experts, including the statewide coalition on family violence conducting the study in conjunction with HHSC and the researcher described by Section 2(b)(2) of this Act;
- (3) evaluate the effectiveness of the program in increasing male involvement in addressing family violence;
- (4) incorporate background information, such as the number of calls made to domestic violence hotlines, the number of victims of prosecutions of offenses involving family violence, and the number of charges filed in family violence cases, to provide context for the issue of family violence in the Dallas community and this state;
- (5) assess the costs associated with the program and other community activities addressing family violence and sources of funding;
- (6) determine the feasibility of implementing any or all of the program aspects or other community activities addressing family violence at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts; and
- (7) make recommendations to the legislature regarding implementing any or all of the program aspects or other community activities addressing family violence at the state level or in additional local communities or school districts.

**SECTION 4. AGENCY PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION.** Requires the Department of Family and Protective Services and each other health and human services agency under the authority of HHSC to participate in the study and provide appropriate assistance. Requires the Texas Education Agency to cooperate with HHSC as necessary to enable HHSC to assess the feasibility of implementing any or all of the program aspects or other community activities addressing family violence in school districts.

**SECTION 5. REPORT.** Requires HHSC to submit a report to the legislature regarding the results of the study and HHSC's recommendations regarding expanded implementation any or all program aspects or other community activities addressing family violence not later than December 1, 2016.

**SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.** Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.