

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R27341 AJZ-D

C.S.S.B. 1681
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Intergovernmental Relations
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Public health officials contend there is a need to have increased communication and collaboration between local and state public health officials. This collaboration can lead to a more efficient use of local and state resources in order to better handle of health risks and challenges affecting the Rio Grande Valley region.

S.B. 1681 would establish a Regional Communicable Disease and Public Health Center in Hidalgo County to address the communicable disease and public health challenges of the international border region. The Center would enable the state to maximize the use of local resources, develop a unified message, and reduce duplication of staff resources. Additionally, the Center would foster a greater local and regional capacity to better address diseases, such as the Zika virus and the Chikungunya virus. S.B. 1681 would also allow the border region as well as Texas to capitalize on the expertise of local health professionals and other departments to better serve the border communities and this state.

The committee substitute was developed after visiting with key stakeholders. It would allow the county to collaborate with other appropriate entities, such as higher education institutions and organizations. The substitute also makes the establishment of the Center permissive.

C.S.S.B. 1681 amends current law relating to the establishment of the Communicable Disease and Public Health Center.

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. Sets forth the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subchapter K, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

Sec. 81.451. DEFINITION. Defines "center."

Sec. 81.452. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO ESTABLISH CENTER. Requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to enter into a memorandum of understanding with a county located on an international border that has a population of at least 700,000 and that has as its county seat a municipality with a population of less than 100,000 to establish and jointly operate a Communicable Disease and Public Health Center (center).

SEC. 81.453. DONATION OF LAND. Authorizes the governing body of a county described by Section 81.452, or a municipality, institution of higher education (IHE), community organization, or health care provider in that county, to donate real property to DSHS for the center. Authorizes the donation to be in fee simple or otherwise.

Sec. 81.454. ASSISTANCE FROM CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES. Authorizes the local health department of a county that enters into a memorandum of understanding under Section 81.452 to seek the assistance of a municipality, IHE, community organization, or health care provider in the local health department's jurisdiction to establish and operate the center.

Sec. 81.455. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER. (a) Authorizes the governing body of a county described by Section 81.452 to enter into an agreement with a municipality, IHE, community organization, or health care provider in that county to:

(1) provide a central repository of vector control resources for municipalities in a county described by Section 81.452 and counties adjacent to that county;

(2) develop local surveillance, outreach, and response campaigns to address communicable disease and potential vectors of communicable disease;

(3) provide local, regional, and international health-related briefings;

(4) cooperate with local, regional, state, and international officials to increase environmental awareness to reduce sources for vector development and develop recommendations for implementing nuisance abatement policies;

(5) with the assistance of appropriate authorities, facilitate any necessary method of vector control, including trapping, adulticiding, and larviciding of vector populations along the international border;

(6) provide to health care professionals current information, including health advisories and guidance with communicable disease case management, regarding communicable disease and potential vectors of communicable disease;

(7) in cooperation with state, federal, and international partners, educate and provide health care screenings to populations at high risk of contracting a communicable disease that are traditionally difficult to contact, including individuals not lawfully present in the United States; and

(8) facilitate information sharing between local entities.

(b) Requires that a local campaign developed under Subsection (a)(2) be in both English and Spanish.

(c) Authorizes the center to serve as a call center for concerns regarding communicable disease and public health along the international border.

(d) Requires a local health department in each county immediately adjacent to an international border to report to the center information regarding incidents of communicable disease in the county, public health challenges in the county, and any other public health or communicable disease issue, as required by DSHS.

(e) Requires the local health department of a county that enters into a memorandum of understanding under Section 81.452 to collaborate with the local health department of each adjoining county and meet with a representative of each described local health department to discuss the health status of each county and address the occurrence and control of communicable disease in each county.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.