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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/30/07

SPONSOR Swisstack LAST UPDATED _____ HB 281

SHORT TITLE Early Childhood Mental Health Training SB _____

ANALYST Lucero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$500.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 281 appropriates five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) from the general fund to the Children, Youth and Families Department for expenditure in fiscal year 2008 and subsequent fiscal years to develop and maintain the infrastructure and staff, and evaluate and provide critical resource supports for an early childhood mental health training institute that uses a continuum of care model based on national best practices.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of five hundred thousand (\$500,000) contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.

The appropriation is not part of the Executive recommendation for Children Youth and Families Department.

CYFD requested \$250,000 for an infant mental health training institute which was to provide training to experts in the field of infant mental health. The LFC and executive recommendations did not support this request.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Early childhood mental health is recognized as an important aspect of early childhood development. Early childhood behavioral disorders can result in more costly and complicated mental health issues including attachment disorders and delayed social and educational development. Because this is a new and rapidly expanding field of professional expertise, training providers in best practice standards is an important mechanism for assuring high-quality programs and services.

This bill does not specify what types of critical resource supports are to be provided and evaluated for an early childhood mental health training institute.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

If passed, the bill will have an administrative impact on children, youth and families department that the bill does not address.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None identified.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None identified.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Information about healthy development can help parents, schoolteachers, doctors, policy makers, and advocates know whether the children in their care are developing normally, and help them get the appropriate help when needed.

Children who have specific cognitive or sensory impairments (like hearing loss or problems with vision), children who live in chaotic or unpredictable environments or children who have noticeable difficulty in establishing loving, stable relationships with caring adults are at higher risk of problems as they grow older. Long-lasting difficulties could include behavioral problems, poor coping skills, inability to concentrate, decreased self-esteem and an inability to share or react appropriately to others. Often such difficulties mean that children start kindergarten noticeably behind their peers. Many then struggle to catch up throughout their entire school careers.

Identifying difficulties early, in the 0-to-5 year age range, and providing families with the proper assessments and interventions can make a difference in a child's earliest years and for many years thereafter.

Research has shown how important a child's earliest years are. Most importantly, the relationships formed with parents and caregivers during these early years establish the foundation for all future development – intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral.

House Bill 281 – Page 3

Research has also shown that behavioral and mental health problems can emerge in infants, toddlers and preschoolers. If left undiagnosed and untreated, resulting problems can include school failure, child abuse, delinquency, and mental illness.

ALTERNATIVES

None identified.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Status Quo

DL/csd