

**Senate Governance and Finance Committee Analysis of
SB 893**

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Fiscal: Yes

Tax Levy: No

Bill Analysis:

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2011 (URGENCY)**

Creates a review and outcome reporting system for health and human service programs.

Background and Existing Law

The Health and Human Services Agency administers and oversees health, social services, public assistance, and rehabilitation programs that affect nearly all Californians. Annual funding for Agency program's includes \$36 billion in state funds and \$38 billion in federal funding.

The Agency provides leadership to 13 state entities, including the:

- Department of Aging,
- Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs,
- Department of Child Support Services,
- Department of Community Services and Development,
- Department of Developmental Services,
- Emergency Medical Services Authority,
- Department of Health Care Services,
- Department of Mental Health,
- Department of Public Health,
- Department of Rehabilitation,
- Department of Social Services,
- Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, and
- Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board.

The Agency's leadership role includes promoting coordination and service integration, reducing duplication and fragmentation, and ensuring program integrity. In turn, the entities that make up the agency administer programs, monitor compliance with state statutes and funding requirements, review performance, and conduct program evaluations for health and human service programs, many of which are administered by local agencies or community-based organizations.

California's ongoing fiscal crisis has required funding reductions for nearly all health and human services. As part of his budget proposal, the Governor has called for shifting program responsibilities among state departments, expanding the authority of local agencies over the operations of select public programs, and reducing state expenditures to balance the budget.

Proposed Law

Senate Bill 893 directs the Health and Human Services Agency, by December 1, 2013, in collaboration with local agencies, service recipients and others, to design and

establish a system for periodically reviewing the performance of mental health, substance abuse treatment, child welfare services, and adult protective services programs.

The bill requires the Agency to ensure that the design of the review system recognizes and is coordinated with existing performance review and accountability systems.

SB 893 requires the Agency to establish mechanisms for the identification and promotion of best practices in the delivery of health and human services.

The bill directs the Agency to draft an information sharing plan to enable the exchange of information and data necessary to evaluate health and human programs and promote the adoption of best practices.

SB 893 directs the Agency to provide the Legislature with periodic reports on its progress, including identifying statutory, funding, staffing or other barriers to accomplishing the goals of the bill.

Comments

1. Purpose of the bill. SB 893 builds upon the outcomes and accountability system for California's Child Welfare System (AB 636, Steinberg, 2001). The AB 636 system allows the public and policymakers to monitor the Child Welfare System and provides clear direction to managers and staff on the system's overarching goals. SB 893 expands and improves upon that model to ensure that key human service programs are effective and utilizing best practices. Despite progress in some areas, state and local officials currently do not have a strategy for reviewing the quality of public programs, monitoring outcomes, or providing the guidance and technical assistance needed to promote the replication of best practices. SB 893 equips the Health and Human Services Agency to develop and implement that strategy.

2. An executive branch function? The Health and Human Services Agency is already directed to support coordination and conduct oversight of publicly supported programs. SB 893 provides direction where additional direction may not be needed. The Health and Human Services Secretary to can pursue the goals of SB 893 without legislation.

3. Making good on past promises? The 1991 program realignment shifted program authority from state government to the counties and called for state agencies to focus on oversight and technical assistance. The Mental Health Services Act establishes specific goals for the delivery of mental health services and establishes an oversight commission. The federal government requires the state to monitor the performance of substance abuse and child welfare programs. But California does not yet have systems in place to monitor and communicate information on performance and outcomes with the public and policymakers. With limited exceptions, the state has not developed the capacity to identify best practices and promote their adoption.

4. What they said. AB 893 responds to comments from local officials during informational hearings held by the Senate Governance and Finance Committee in January 2011. Witnesses testified that barriers on information sharing will impede the ability of local agencies to reduce costs and improve outcomes as proposed in the Governor's January budget proposal. SB 893 requires the development of an information sharing plan, but also directs the Agency to consult with local officials and others on what information should be shared as part of its role in monitoring outcomes, supporting service integration and providing technical assistance.

5. Double referral. SB 893 was double-referred to Senate Human Services and Senate Governance and Finance. SB 893 passed out of the Human Services Committee on a vote of 4-2.

Support and Opposition (6/30/11)

Support : Unknown.

Opposition : Unknown.