

House Bill (HB) 446

Rep. Tom Craddick



Respectful Language for Intellectual Disabilities

HB 446 would remove terminology from Texas statutes that is widely considered to be outdated and offensive. It would replace variants of the term "retardation" with the term "intellectual disability" to align with current medical and societal standards. The bill also removes or changes references to abolished state agencies, such as the Dept. of Aging & Disability Services, whose functions were folded into other agencies.



In 2010, the U.S. Congress unanimously approved "Rosa's Law," which eliminated references to the R-word from federal statutes. It was inspired by Rosa Marcellino, a nine-year-old with Down syndrome who worked to remove it from statutes in her home state of Maryland.



The Texas Legislature is gradually removing statutory references to the R-word, such as in changes made to the Parks and Wildlife Code with SB 700 (87R) and to portions of the Education Code with HB 965 (86R).



Supporters of the legislation include the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Disability Rights Texas, NAMI Texas, Texas Association of School Psychologists, Texas Council of Community Centers, and Texas Right to Life.

"[The R-word] is hurtful, disrespectful, and quite simply unacceptable. ... It is past time that Texas replaces this derogatory term to get respect and dignity to all."

Public comment to the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, March 2023

