

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 821
By: Watson
Health & Human Services
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Central Texas has a health care provider shortage that will worsen over the next decade, affecting the quality, cost, and accessibility of health care. This shortage will affect not only those who have private health insurance, but also those who may qualify for Medicaid, as well as over 67,000 current Medicare beneficiaries and the tens of thousands of people who will age into Medicare in the coming years.

A May 2009 report by the Seton Family of Hospitals found that Central Texas will be short 3,000 physicians in 10 years. The largest gaps will be in primary care (family practice, internal medicine, and pediatrics) and in certain medical and surgical subspecialties such as pulmonology and psychiatry. Data show that Travis County has 2,853 physicians for a population of over one million; only 37 percent of those provide primary care. The state of Texas currently ranks 45th in the number of physicians per capita.

To meet the health needs of its growing, aging population, the United States should add up to one million nurses and up to 150,000 physicians in the next 15 years, according to Arthur Garson Jr., senior vice president at The University of Texas Health Science Center. Texas medical schools will need to double their output over the next four years and nursing schools will need to double their output over the next 14 years to reach that goal.

In the recent past, the Central Texas community has aggressively pursued an increase in medical education to address this need and to assist in the provision of needed health care in this growing community. The coordinated efforts have illuminated the need for leveraging all potential tools and sources of help. S.B. 821 will allow the Travis County Healthcare District (district) to make capital or financial contributions to a charitable organization for the support of medical, dental, or clinical education, training, or research occurring within the district for the purpose of delivery of health care services to or for the district.

Current law permits the district to make a capital or other financial contribution to a charitable organization created by the district to provide regional administration and delivery of health care services to or for the district. This authorization will allow the district to work with other organizations in the community to increase health care education in Central Texas, which will lead to the provision of health care services to the people of the district—part of the original purpose for creation of the district.

As proposed, S.B. 821 amends current law relating to the authority of the Travis County Healthcare District to make capital or financial contributions to charitable organizations.

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. Amends Section 281.0565(d), Health and Safety Code, to authorize a district created in a county with a population of more than 800,000 that was not included in the

boundaries of a hospital district before September 1, 2003, to make a capital or other financial contribution to:

(1) a charitable organization create by the district to provide regional administration and delivery of health care services to or for the district; or

(2) a charitable organization for the support of medical, dental, or clinical education, training, or research occurring within the district for the purpose of delivery of health care services to or for the district.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.