

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 463
By: Springer
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Subscription programs for air ambulance services are particularly important in sparsely populated rural areas with limited medical services. These programs can provide speedy transportation to hospitals for members in isolated areas while limiting costs. Unfortunately, membership in such a program does not guarantee the availability of service when an emergency occurs, which can lead to charges being incurred for the total cost of transport provided by another air ambulance service provider. H.B. 463 seeks to address this issue by establishing requirements for reciprocity agreements between air ambulance companies operating a subscription program.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 463 amends the Health and Safety Code to require an air ambulance company that operates a subscription program in order to fund and provide emergency medical services, in accordance with executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) rules, to enter into a reciprocity agreement with each other air ambulance company in Texas that operates a subscription program to ensure maximum geographic coverage for patients covered under a subscription program. The bill establishes that the Insurance Code does not apply to such a reciprocity agreement. The bill requires the executive commissioner of HHSC to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.