

**SUBJECT:** License for emergency medical services that transport patients by stretcher

**COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Delisi, Laubenberg, Jackson, Cohen, Gonzales, S. King, Olivo, Truitt  
0 nays  
1 absent — Coleman

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 26 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** (*On House companion, HB 3263 by Chavez:*)  
For — Rachel Harracksingh, Texas Ambulance Association and Life Ambulance Service Inc.; GK Sprinkle, Texas Ambulance Association  
Against — None  
On — Ben G. Raimer, University of Texas Medical Branch CMC;  
(*Registered, but did not testify:* Maxie Bishop, Department of State Health Services)

**BACKGROUND:** Health and Safety Code, Ch. 733 — the Emergency Health Care Act — governs transportation of sick and injured patients after stabilization and encourages public access to emergency medical transportation in each area of the state. The act regulates emergency medical service providers and the types of services they can provide.  
  
In 2005, the 79th Legislature enacted HB 1126 by Uresti, which exempts from DSHS licensure ground transportation and staff used to transport a patient under a physician’s care between medical facilities, or between a facility and a private residence, unless it is medically necessary to transport the patient using a stretcher.

**DIGEST:** SB 1033 would prohibit a person or entity from transporting a patient by stretcher in a vehicle unless the person or entity were licensed by DSHS as an emergency medical services provider.

The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission would be required to adopt rules to implement the bill by November 1, 2007.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2007.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

SB 1033 would amend the law regulating ambulance providers to state clearly and unambiguously that only a licensed emergency medical services provider may transport a patient by stretcher. Unlicensed companies use vehicles that are not required to meet minimum safety standards established for ambulances regulated by the state. Licensed vehicles, and the highly trained personnel who operate and staff them, help to ensure that patients who require a stretcher are transported safely without sustaining further injury.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.

**NOTES:**

The identical companion, HB 3263 by Chavez, was heard and left pending in the House Public Health Committee on April 18.