

- SUBJECT:** Continuing education for doctors and nurses treating tick-borne diseases
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Kolkhorst, Naishtat, Coleman, S. Davis, S. King, Schwertner, Truitt
- 0 nays
- 4 absent — Alvarado, V. Gonzales, Laubenberg, Zerwas
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, May 11 — 31-0
- WITNESSES:** (*On House companion, HB 2975*)
For — Kylie Adamson; Lucina Botond; Dave Claunch; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Harriet Bishop, Texas Lyme Disease Association; Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association; Mary Delaware; Charles Gordon; Teresa Jones; Haley Mack; Jill Selman; Weston Selman; Charlie Webb)
- Against — None
- On — Megan Goode, Texas Medical Board
- BACKGROUND:** Concerns about an increased incidence of tick-borne diseases (e.g., Lyme disease) in Texas have raised questions about whether physicians and nurses should receive more training on how to diagnose and treat these illnesses.
- DIGEST:** SB 1360 would require the Texas Medical Board to adopt rules to establish the content of and approval requirements for continuing medical education on the treatment of tick-borne diseases (e.g., Lyme disease) by January 31, 2012.
- The TMB would have to seek input from affected parties and review relevant continuing medical education courses, including courses that had been approved in other states. Any course identified and approved for accreditation would have to represent an appropriate spectrum of relevant

medical clinical treatment relating to tick-borne diseases and qualify as an approved continuing education course for license renewals.

The TMB would have to cooperate with the Texas Board of Nursing to adopt rules would have to adopt the rules by January 31, 2012. The TMB and the Texas Board of Nursing would be required to report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker concerning the adoption of the rules by February 6, 2012.

A licensed physician or nurse whose practice included treatment for tick-borne diseases would be encouraged to complete continuing medical education in this area during each two-year licensing period or upon renewal.

If a licensed physician or nurse was under investigation for a complaint related to the treatment of a tick-borne disease, the TMB would have to consider the physician's participation in a continuing medical education course in this area if the course had been completed within two years before the investigation.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2011, and would apply to a relevant investigation or disciplinary action filed on or after the effective date.

NOTES:

The House committee substitute differs from the Senate-passed version by requiring the TMB to seek input from affected parties and requiring any approved continuing medical education course representing an appropriate spectrum of relevant medical clinical treatment relating to tick-borne diseases to qualify as an approved continuing education course for license renewals.

The House companion bill, HB 2975 by Hunter, passed the House by 141-0 on May 12, and was reported favorably, as substituted, by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee on May 20 and recommended for the Local and Uncontested Calendar.