

- SUBJECT:** Increasing the size of the physician assistant board
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Crownover, Naishtat, Blanco, Coleman, S. Davis, Guerra, R. Miller, Sheffield, Zedler, Zerwas
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Collier
- WITNESSES:** For — Laurie Benton, Texas Academy of Physician Assistants;
(*Registered, but did not testify:* Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Mari Robinson, Texas Medical Board; Texas Physician Assistant Board)
- BACKGROUND:** Licensed physician assistants currently are regulated by the Texas Physician Assistant Board (Occupations Code, ch. 204). The board approves applicants for licensure and holds disciplinary proceedings. Some observers note that recent growth in the number of licensed physician assistants in Texas has caused the workload of the board to increase.
- DIGEST:** HB 2081 would increase the number of members on the physician assistant board from nine to 13 members, all appointed by the governor. The board members would continue to serve staggered six-year terms, with the terms of four or five members, as applicable, expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year.
- By November 1, 2015, the governor would appoint the four new members as follows — one member for a term expiring February 1, 2017, one for a term expiring February 1, 2019, and two for terms expiring February 1, 2021.

The bill also would change the composition of the board to require seven practicing physician assistant members as compared to the three that currently are required. The governor would designate a physician assistant member as the presiding officer.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.