

- SUBJECT:** Establishing the University of Houston College of Medicine
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — C. Turner, Stucky, Button, Frullo, Howard, E. Johnson, Pacheco, Schaefer, Smithee, Walle, Wilson
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Lindsay Lanagan, Legacy Community Health; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Nancy Walker, Harris Health System; Meghan Weller, HCA Healthcare; Lisa Kaufman, Humana; David Gonzales, Humana Health Plans of Texas; Bill Kelly, City of Houston Mayor’s Office; Michelle Romero, Texas Medical Association)
- Against — None
- On — Rex Peebles, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; Stephen Spann, University of Houston
- DIGEST:** HB 826 would establish the University of Houston College of Medicine (UHCM) as a college of the University of Houston under the management and control of the board of regents of the University of Houston System.
- The bill would allow the dean of the college, on behalf of the board, to execute and carry out an affiliation or coordinating agreement with any other entity or institution in the college's region. The board would be authorized to:
- prescribe courses leading to customary degrees;
 - adopt rules for the operation, control, and management of the college as necessary;
 - solicit, accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private source for the benefit of the college;
 - enter into agreements under which a public or private entity could

provide additional facilities to be used in the college's teaching and research programs, including libraries, auditoriums, research facilities, and medical education buildings.

HB 826 would authorize a public or private entity to provide UHCM with a teaching hospital considered suitable by the board of regents. The hospital could not be constructed, maintained, or operated with state funds.

The bill would classify UHCM as a medical and dental unit and would include the school in the following lists in statute:

- health-related institutions of higher education that are eligible for appropriations from the permanent health fund;
- university systems and health centers eligible for medical malpractice coverage and a professional liability fund; and
- medical schools that may enter into contracts for medical residency programs.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 826 would create a medical school at the University of Houston in the city's Third Ward, benefiting that community and the state. By focusing on primary care, underrepresented populations in the medical profession, and medical residencies, the University of Houston College of Medicine (UHCM) would help Texas better provide care to underserved populations, including those in rural areas.

Texas is facing a primary care physician shortage. HB 826 would address this shortage by emphasizing primary care, with a goal of 50 percent of students becoming primary care physicians upon graduation.

UHCM has plans to place medical students in primary care residencies

throughout the school's surrounding area, enabling a greater number of Texans to practice medicine in their home state and addressing any concerns about the medical school having sufficient residency slots to allow students to stay and practice in Texas.

HB 826 would create thousands of jobs, benefit local communities both economically and in terms of public health, and help Texas close a widening gap in the number of primary care physicians it needs.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No concerns identified.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the institution reports that UHCM's start-up and development timing is contingent upon the \$20 million of funding in CSHB 1 being appropriated to the University of Houston in the 2020-21 biennium.

Based on enrollment assumptions, the school would be eligible for formula funding allocations in the 2024-25 biennium. Total costs out of the general revenue fund for that biennium are estimated to be \$6.2 million for each fiscal year, increasing to \$21 million for each fiscal year in the 2028-29 biennium.