

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 388
By: Whitmire
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, a sample survey showed that a disproportionate number of phone calls to the six poison control centers in Texas are handled by staff in Dallas or Galveston, with the remainder of calls being handled by the other centers. Because of budget shortfalls and increased operating costs for these centers, recommendations from an interim study include sharing costs through contractual agreements would provide additional revenue that could be used as a means to recover the costs of providing services. This bill permits poison control centers to service other regions that have centers in order to maximize resources and to provide appropriate services in each region.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 388 permits poison control centers to service other regions that have centers in order to maximize resources and to provide appropriate services in each region.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Department of Health and the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications in SECTION 1 (Section 777.001(b), Health and Safety Code), of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 777.001(b), Health and Safety Code, by authorizing the Texas Department of Health and the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communication (TDH/ACSEC) to jointly adopt rules permitting poison control centers (centers) to provide services for regions having other centers in order to increase resource efficiency and to provide appropriate services.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 777.002(b) and (c), Health and Safety Code, to provide that regional poison information services may be available directly from the center for the region or from another center, but shall be available through all 9-1-1 services. Provides that 9-1-1 service calls may be routed to a poison control answering site, if the routing does not adversely affect the immediate availability of poisoning management services. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Chapter 777, Health and Safety Code, by adding Sections 777.010 and 777.011, as follows:

Sec. 777.010. **OUT-OF-REGION SERVICES; SERVICES FOR PRIVATE ENTITIES.** Sets forth requirements for TDH/ACSEC to enter into a contract for the provision of telephone referral and information services or any program or service described by Section 777.003. Requires TDH/ACSEC to contract with one or more regional centers to provide the services required under Subsection (a), and prohibits a contract that would result in diminished services to the region. Requires a contract described under Subsection (a) to recover costs for services provided and to deposit any revenue from a contract into the regional poison control services account.

Sec. 777.011. **REGIONAL POISON CONTROL SERVICES ACCOUNT.** Provides that the regional poison control services account is an account in the general revenue fund and is

composed of deposits under Section 777.010(c). Sets forth authorizations for appropriations to TDH/ACSEC.

SECTION 4. Requires TDH/ACSEC to conduct a study for determining contract opportunities for poison control services and sets forth requirements for the study. Requires TDH/ACSEC to report to the legislature with respect to implementation of this section by January 15, 1999.

SECTION 5. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.