

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R6633 MCK-D

S.B. 830
By: Madla
Health Services
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As Filed

DIGEST

On September 18, 1997, Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock issued a supplemental charge to the Interim Committee on Health and Human Services (committee) to study current practices in patient billing by Texas hospitals and providers of health care to evaluate the accuracy, clarity, and timeliness of patient billing. The committee found that current practices in patient billing by hospitals and health care providers is not adequate. A patient bill uses codes and acronyms which are not explained; lists dates that do not correspond to actual dates of treatment; and provides no information on contact persons who could answer questions on a bill. S.B. 830 would require specific information to be included in a patient bill.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 830 establishes minimum requirements for an itemized statement of billed services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 241.154(d), Health and Safety Code, to prohibit a hospital from charging a fee for providing an itemized statement of billed services to a patient or third-party payor, except as provided under Section 311.002(f), rather than 311.002(e).

SECTION 2. Amends Section 311.002, Health and Safety Code, to require each hospital to develop, implement, and enforce a written policy for the billing of hospital services and supplies. Requires the policy to include a periodic review of the itemized statements required by Subsection (b), and a procedure for handling complaints relating to billed services. Requires the hospital to provide on request an itemized statement of the billed services provided to the person, no later than the 30th, rather than 10th, business day after the date of the hospital discharge of a person who receives hospital services. Sets forth requirements for an itemized statement. Authorizes the Texas Department of Health or other appropriate licensing agency to enforce this section by assessing an administrative penalty, obtaining an injunction, or providing any other appropriate remedy, including suspending, revoking, or refusing to renew a hospital's license. Redefines "hospital." Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 311.0025, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subsection (e), to prohibit a licensing agency from taking disciplinary action against a hospital, treatment facility, mental health facility, or health care professional for unknowing and isolated billing errors.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 5(b), Article 4512p, V.T.C.S., to prohibit a health care professional from violating Section 311.0025, Health and Safety Code, rather than persistently or flagrantly overcharge or overtreat a patient.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 3.08, Article 4495b, V.T.C.S., to make conforming changes.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 1999.
Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 7. Emergency clause.