

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
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S.B. 1483  
By: Duncan  
Health & Human Services  
4/2/2001  
As Filed

### **DIGEST AND PURPOSE**

The rural Texas-Mexico border areas of Texas are typically medically underserved and tend to have lower Medicaid reimbursement rates. As proposed, S.B. 1483 requires the Health and Human Services Commission to create and administer telemedicine pilot programs in border areas to enhance health care services and provide for reimbursement and regulation of telemedicine services.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 531B, Government Code, by adding Sections 531.02171 and 531.02172, as follows:

Sec. 531.02171. **TELEMEDICINE PILOT PROGRAMS.** (a) Defines "telemedicine medical service."

(b) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (commission) to establish pilot programs in designated areas of this state under which the commission, in administering government-funded health programs, may reimburse a health care professional participating in the pilot program for telemedicine medical services authorized under the licensing law applicable to the health care professional. Requires each pilot program established before January 1, 2003, to be operated in areas of this state that are not more than 150 miles from the border between this state and the United Mexican States.

(c) Requires the commission, in developing and operating a pilot program under this section, to:

- (1) solicit and obtain support for the program from local officials and the medical community;
- (2) focus on enhancing health outcomes in the area served by the pilot program through increased access to medical services, including certain medical services;
- (3) establish quantifiable measures and expected health outcomes for each authorized telemedicine medical service;
- (4) consider condition-specific applications of telemedicine medical services, including applications for certain medical conditions; and
- (5) demonstrate that the provision of services authorized as telemedicine medical services will not adversely affect the provision of traditional medical services within the

area served by the pilot program.

Sec. 531.02172. **TELEMEDICINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.** (a) Requires the commissioner of health and human services (commissioner) to establish an advisory committee to assist the commission in:

- (1) evaluating policies for telemedical consultations under Section 531.0217;
- (2) evaluating policies for telemedicine medical service pilot programs established under Section 531.02171;
- (3) ensuring the efficient and consistent development and use of telecommunication technology for telemedical consultations and telemedicine medical services reimbursed under government-funded health programs;
- (4) monitoring the type of programs receiving reimbursement under Section 531.0217 and 531.02171; and
- (5) coordinating the activities of state agencies concerned with the use of telemedical consultations and telemedicine medical services.

(b) Sets forth the required composition of the advisory committee.

(c) Provides that a member of the advisory committee serves at the will of the commissioner.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 57C, Utilities Code, by adding Section 57.0471, as follows:

Sec. 57.0471. **GRANTS TO CERTAIN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.** Provides that a health care facility providing telemedicine medical services and participating in a pilot program under Section 531.02171, Government Code, is eligible to receive a grant under Section 57.047.

SECTION 3. Repealer: Section 531.0217(h) (regarding an advisory committee), Government Code.

SECTION 4. (a) Requires the commissioner of health and human services to establish the telemedical consultation advisory committee as required by Section 531.02172, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than December 31, 2001.

(b) Requires the advisory committee established under Section 531.02172, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than September 1, 2003, to prepare a report relating to the implementation of the pilot programs established under Section 531.02171, as added by this Act, and to provide the report to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and appropriate standing committees of the senate and house of representatives.

SECTION 5. Provides that the advisory committee established under Section 531.0217(h), Government Code, is abolished on the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.