

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2122
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Medical bills are confusing enough as it is—but in many cases, providers send a patient a single "balance due" bill that does not actually disclose what services were performed and what charges are made. An itemized bill is an important patient protection that helps ensure that patients know what they are being charged for, and that the bill is correct. The lack of an itemized bill does not allow transparency. Patients are not able to check to make sure that the correct services were billed or recorded. The lack of an itemized bill continues to hide actual prices from patients, even after they are being told what they owe. While patients are theoretically entitled to an itemized bill upon request, actually getting ahold of a billing department representative who can provide one can be much more difficult than it should be.

S.B. 2122 requires that a medical provider send an itemized bill prior to attempting to collect any money from the patient. If the provider is not attempting to collect any money from the patient, the provider is not required to send the itemized bill.

The bill must include an itemized list of each medical service provided, the amount the provider will accept as payment in full for that service, and a plain language description of the service.

As proposed, S.B. 2122 amends current law relating to itemized billing for health care services and supplies provided by health care providers.

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 Title 2, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subtitle J, as follows:

SUBTITLE J. PAYMENT FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND SUPPLIES

CHAPTER 185. HEALTH CARE BILLING

Sec. 185.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "debt collection," "health care provider," and "health care service."

Sec. 185.002. ITEMIZED BILL REQUIRED. Requires a health care provider, before a health care provider pursues any debt collection against a patient for whom the provider provided a health care service or related supply, to issue to the patient a written itemized bill of charges for all health care services and supplies provided to the patient during the visit to the provider. Requires that the bill include the amount charged for each health care service and supply provided to the patient by that provider and any other provider during that visit.

Sec. 185.003. DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY LICENSING AUTHORITY. Authorizes the appropriate licensing authority to take disciplinary action against a health care provider that violates this chapter as if the provider violated an applicable licensing law.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.