

AN ACT

relating to county and municipal authority to balance bill for county or municipal air or ground ambulance services and to a study regarding billing by ground ambulance service providers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 113.902(a), Local Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Except as provided by Section 140.013, the [The] county treasurer shall direct prosecution for the recovery of any debt owed to the county, as provided by law, and shall supervise the collection of the debt.

SECTION 2. Chapter 140, Local Government Code, is amended by adding Section 140.013 to read as follows:

Sec. 140.013. BALANCE BILLING FOR COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL AMBULANCE SERVICES. (a) "Balance billing" means the practice of charging an enrollee in a health benefit plan to recover from the enrollee the balance of a health care provider's fee for a service received by the enrollee from the health care provider that is not fully reimbursed by the enrollee's health benefit plan.

(b) A county or municipality may elect to consider a health benefit plan payment towards a claim for air or ground ambulance services provided by the county or municipality as payment in full for those services regardless of the amount the county or municipality charged for those services.

1        (c) A county or municipality may not practice balance  
2 billing for a claim for which the county or municipality makes an  
3 election under Subsection (b).

4        SECTION 3. (a) In this section, "department" means the  
5 Texas Department of Insurance.

6        (b) The department shall conduct a study on the balance  
7 billing practices of ground ambulance service providers, the  
8 variations in prices for ground ambulance services, the proportion  
9 of ground ambulances that are in-network, trends in network  
10 inclusion, and factors contributing to the network status of ground  
11 ambulances. The department may seek the assistance of the  
12 Department of State Health Services in conducting the study.

13        (c) Not later than December 1, 2022, the department shall  
14 provide a written report of the results of the study conducted under  
15 Subsection (b) of this section to the governor, lieutenant  
16 governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and members of  
17 the standing committees of the legislature with primary  
18 jurisdiction over the department.

19        (d) This section expires September 1, 2023.

20        SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 790 passed the Senate on April 9, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendments on May 28, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 790 passed the House, with amendments, on May 25, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 117, Nays 26, two present not voting.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor