

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 56

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of comprehensive access points for health care.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 487, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 487.059 to read as follows:

Sec. 487.059. COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS POINTS FOR HEALTH CARE.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Primary health services provider" means:

(A) an allopathic or osteopathic primary care physician, which includes:

(i) a family practitioner;

(ii) an internist;

(iii) a pediatrician;

(iv) an obstetrician or gynecologist; and

(v) a general psychiatrist;

(B) a primary care nurse practitioner;

(C) a certified nurse midwife;

(D) a certified midwife;

(E) a primary care physician assistant;

(F) a general practice dentist;

(G) a registered clinical dental hygienist;

(H) a clinical or counseling psychologist;

(I) a clinical social worker;

1           (J) a psychiatric nurse specialist;

2           (K) a mental health counselor;

3           (L) a licensed professional counselor; and

4           (M) a marriage or family therapist.

5           (2) "Rural county" has the definition assigned by  
6 Section 487.301.

7           (3) "Rural community" means a community in a rural  
8 county.

9           (b) The office, with cooperation from the Texas Department  
10 of Health, the Health and Human Services Commission, the statewide  
11 rural health care system designated under Chapter 845, Insurance  
12 Code, public health departments in rural counties, and professional  
13 health care associations, shall assess the health care needs of  
14 each rural community and the pattern of use of health care services  
15 in each of those communities.

16           (c) The agencies shall use the information collected under  
17 Subsection (b) to collaborate with the rural community to determine  
18 a comprehensive access point for health care to coordinate the  
19 delivery of health care, including delivery of services offered  
20 under the medical assistance program under Chapter 32, Human  
21 Resources Code, and the state child health plan under Chapter 62,  
22 Health and Safety Code, to residents of the rural community.

23           (d) Each agency listed in Subsection (b) shall provide  
24 services covered by programs of the agency to residents of rural  
25 communities from the comprehensive access points for health care.  
26 Each agency shall implement working arrangements with primary  
27 health services providers to work from or through each access point

1 to provide services to residents of the rural communities served by  
2 the access point. Primary health services providers providing  
3 services at an access point must be eligible to serve residents who  
4 are enrolled in federal and agency programs, including:

5 (1) the federal special supplemental nutrition  
6 program for women, infants, and children under 42 U.S.C. Section  
7 1786, as amended;

8 (2) the state child health plan under Chapter 62,  
9 Health and Safety Code;

10 (3) the medical assistance program under Chapter 32,  
11 Human Resources Code; and

12 (4) the Medicare program.

13 (e) The office shall report to the legislature regarding the  
14 efficacy of comprehensive access points for health care as part of  
15 the office's report to the legislature under Section 487.056.

16 SECTION 2. (a) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Office  
17 of Rural Community Affairs, after ensuring approval from local  
18 communities, shall choose three or four sites to serve as  
19 comprehensive access points for health care as required by Section  
20 487.059, Government Code, as added by this Act.

21 (b) The Office of Rural Community Affairs may designate  
22 additional sites as comprehensive access points for health care if  
23 the office determines, as reported in its annual report delivered  
24 to the legislature on January 1, 2005, that the access points are  
25 effective in coordinating health care services to residents of  
26 rural counties.

27 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.