

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 805
By: Martinez
Border and International Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Emergency medical service organizations in the border area report that a significant number of individuals they transport across the Texas-Mexico border for emergency prehospital care do not possess adequate proof of identification. This inability of an emergency medical service provider to ascertain the accurate identification of a patient can pose a significant challenge to efforts at enhanced homeland security along the international border, especially with concerns about a bioterrorism event.

The committee substitute to House Bill 805 authorizes emergency and hospital personnel to take the thumbprint of certain people who receive emergency prehospital care.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1 Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 773, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 773.015 to grant authority to emergency medical services personnel or emergency room medical or admissions personnel to take the thumbprint of a person who receives emergency prehospital care. To take the thumbprint, the person must not possess identification at the time the care is administered, be unconscious, be transported across the Texas-Mexico border by ambulance or helicopter while receiving emergency prehospital care, and be delivered to a hospital that has digital fingerprinting capabilities.

SECTION 2 The effective date of this Act is September 1, 2005.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The committee substitute replaces the provisions in the original bill that allow a law enforcement officer to take the thumbprint of a person who receives emergency medical services in a county bordering Mexico with a provision that allows emergency services personnel or emergency room medical or admissions personnel to take the thumbprint of a person who receives emergency prehospital care if the person does not possess personal identification at the time care is administered, is unconscious, is transported across the Texas-Mexico border by ambulance or helicopter, and is delivered to a hospital that has digital fingerprinting capabilities.