

By: Woolley

H.B. No. 916

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating the Governor's Health Care Coordinating Council.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle E, Title 2, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Chapter 113 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 113. GOVERNOR'S HEALTH CARE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Sec. 113.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "council" means the Governor's Health Care Coordinating Council.

Sec. 113.002. COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL. (a) The council is within the office of the governor and shall report to the governor or the governor's designee.

(b) The council is composed of the administrative head of the following agencies or that person's designee:

(1) the Health and Human Services Commission;

(2) the Department of State Health Services;

(3) the Department of Aging and Disability Services;

(4) the Texas Workforce Commission;

(5) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;

(6) the Texas Department of Insurance;

(7) the Employees Retirement System of Texas;

(8) the Teacher Retirement System of Texas;

(9) each health care related licensing agency identified by the governor; and

1 (10) any other state agency identified by the governor
2 that purchases health care services.

3 Sec. 113.003. COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES. Service on the
4 council is an additional duty of a member's office or employment. A
5 member of the council is not entitled to compensation but is
6 entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by the member
7 while conducting the business of the council, as provided in the
8 General Appropriations Act.

9 Sec. 113.004. MEETINGS. (a) The council shall meet at
10 least once each year. The council may meet at other times at the
11 call of the presiding officer or as provided by the rules of the
12 council.

13 (b) The council is a governmental body for purposes of the
14 open meetings law, Chapter 551, Government Code.

15 Sec. 113.005. DIRECTOR; STAFF. (a) The council shall,
16 subject to the approval of the governor, hire a director to serve as
17 the chief executive officer of the council and to perform the
18 administrative duties of the council.

19 (b) The director serves at the will of the council.

20 (c) The director may hire staff within guidelines
21 established by the council.

22 Sec. 113.006. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY. (a) The
23 director or the director's designee shall prepare and maintain a
24 written policy statement that implements a program of equal
25 employment opportunity to ensure that all personnel decisions are
26 made without regard to race, color, disability, sex, religion, age,
27 or national origin.

1 (b) The policy statement must include:

2 (1) personnel policies, including policies relating
3 to recruitment, evaluation, selection, training, and promotion of
4 personnel, that show the intent of the council to avoid the unlawful
5 employment practices described by Chapter 21, Labor Code; and

6 (2) an analysis of the extent to which the composition
7 of the council's personnel is in accordance with state and federal
8 law and a description of reasonable methods to achieve compliance
9 with state and federal law.

10 (c) The policy statement must:

11 (1) be updated annually;

12 (2) be reviewed by the civil rights division of the
13 Texas Workforce Commission for compliance with Subsection (b)(1);
14 and

15 (3) be filed with the governor's office.

16 Sec. 113.007. QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT. The
17 director or the director's designee shall provide to members of the
18 council and to council employees, as often as necessary,
19 information regarding the requirements for office or employment
20 under this chapter, including information regarding a person's
21 responsibilities under applicable laws relating to standards of
22 conduct for state officers or employees.

23 Sec. 113.008. RESEARCH PROJECTS; REPORT. (a) The council
24 shall identify gaps, flaws, inefficiencies, or problems in the
25 health care system that create systemic or substantial negative
26 impacts on the participants in the health care system, study those
27 problems, and identify possible solutions for the state or other

1 participants in the system.

2 (b) Not later than September 1 after each regular session of
3 the legislature, the speaker of the house of representatives and
4 the lieutenant governor may submit health care related issues to
5 the governor for referral to the council. The health care related
6 issues may include:

7 (1) disparities in quality and levels of care;

8 (2) problems for uninsured individuals;

9 (3) the cost of pharmaceuticals;

10 (4) the cost of health care;

11 (5) access to health care;

12 (6) the quality of health care; or

13 (7) any other issue related to health care.

14 (c) The governor shall refer health care related issues to
15 the council for research and analysis. The governor shall
16 prioritize the issues for the council. The council shall study
17 those issues identified by the governor and identify possible
18 solutions for the state or other participants in the health care
19 system.

20 (d) Not later than December 31 of each even-numbered year,
21 the council shall submit a report of the council's findings and
22 recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker
23 of the house of representatives.

24 Sec. 113.009. USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN HEALTH CARE. (a) The
25 council shall facilitate and promote the use of technology in the
26 health care system as a way to decrease administrative costs and to
27 increase and improve the quality of health care.

1 (b) The council shall monitor, research, and promote
2 initiatives relating to patient safety and the use of telemedicine
3 and telehealth.

4 Sec. 113.010. INFORMATION RESOURCE. (a) The council shall
5 establish a clearinghouse of information to assist communities in
6 assessing the needs of local health care systems. The council
7 shall:

8 (1) collect information on innovative health care
9 service delivery models and make that information available to
10 communities;

11 (2) provide information on grants and technical
12 assistance in the application process; and

13 (3) collect information on the development and testing
14 of quality measures.

15 (b) The council shall investigate the best ways to collect,
16 compare, and communicate the information to local communities.

17 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
18 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
19 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
20 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
21 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.