

By: Uresti

H.B. No. 3238

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the closure of local eligibility determination offices for health and human services programs.

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

SECTION 1. (a) If the Health and Human Services Commission intends to close a local office that is operated for the purpose of determining an applicant's eligibility for health and human services programs, the commission shall:

(1) submit a list of each office proposed for closure to the legislature and to each local governmental official in a political subdivision, including a hospital district, located in close geographic proximity to each office proposed for closure;

(2) coordinate with members of the legislature and local governmental officials from the geographic areas in which offices proposed for closure are located to schedule and conduct public hearings regarding the proposed closures; and

(3) ensure that transcripts of testimony taken at public hearings conducted under Subdivision (2) of this subsection are prepared.

(b) The Health and Human Services Commission shall ensure that, for each office proposed for closure under Subsection (a) of this section, the commission conducts a public hearing required under Subsection (a)(2) of this section at a location that is not more than 30 miles from the office.

1           SECTION 2. The executive commissioner of the Health and  
2 Human Services Commission shall:

3                 (1) report to the governor, the members of the  
4 standing committees of the senate and house of representatives  
5 having jurisdiction over health and human services, and the local  
6 governmental officials from the geographic areas in which local  
7 eligibility determination offices proposed for closure under  
8 Section 1 of this Act are located regarding the testimony and  
9 recommendations received at the public hearings conducted as  
10 required by that section; and

11                (2) provide the transcripts of testimony taken at  
12 those public hearings to the persons listed in Subdivision (1) of  
13 this section and post those transcripts on the commission's  
14 Internet website.

15           SECTION 3. The committees of the senate and house of  
16 representatives having jurisdiction over health and human services  
17 shall review the report and transcripts provided by the Health and  
18 Human Services Commission under Section 2 of this Act and make  
19 recommendations to the commission regarding the proposed  
20 eligibility determination office closures. The commission may not  
21 close an office until the commission receives and considers those  
22 recommendations.

23           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
24 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
25 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
26 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
27 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.