

1-1 By: Madla, et al. S.B. No. 376
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 7, 2005; February 15, 2005,
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Health and Human
1-4 Services; March 3, 2005, reported favorably by the following vote:
1-5 Yeas 9, Nays 0; March 3, 2005, sent to printer.)

1-6 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-7 AN ACT

1-8 relating to a pilot program for language interpreter services under
1-9 the medical assistance program.

1-10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-11 SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 32, Human Resources Code,
1-12 is amended by adding Section 32.068 to read as follows:

1-13 Sec. 32.068. LANGUAGE INTERPRETER SERVICES PILOT PROGRAM.

1-14 (a) The Health and Human Services Commission shall establish a
1-15 pilot program to provide recipients of medical assistance with oral
1-16 and written language interpreter services in accordance with
1-17 federal law and applicable publications of the federal Centers for
1-18 Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Office for Civil Rights of
1-19 the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

1-20 (b) The commission shall establish the pilot program
1-21 through local governmental entities in at least five sites. The
1-22 commission shall request participation by, and give first priority
1-23 to, the following local governmental entities:

- 1-24 (1) the Harris County Hospital District;
1-25 (2) the Bexar County Hospital District;
1-26 (3) the El Paso County Hospital District;
1-27 (4) the Tarrant County Hospital District; and
1-28 (5) the Parkland Health and Hospital System.

1-29 (c) If one or more local governmental entities listed under
1-30 Subsection (b) decline to participate in the pilot program, the
1-31 commission shall request participation by other local governmental
1-32 entities until the commission obtains agreements to participate
1-33 from a sufficient number of local governmental entities to enable
1-34 the commission to establish the program in at least five sites.

1-35 (d) The commission shall ensure that the pilot program is
1-36 financed using:

1-37 (1) money provided to the commission for purposes of
1-38 the program by participating local governmental entities to
1-39 maximize federal matching money under the medical assistance
1-40 program; and

1-41 (2) any corresponding federal matching money.

1-42 (e) A participating local governmental entity may provide
1-43 money to the commission by certification or intergovernmental
1-44 transfer to finance the pilot program as described by Subsection
1-45 (d)(1).

1-46 (f) Not later than January 1, 2007, the commission shall
1-47 evaluate the pilot program and report to the 80th Legislature on the
1-48 effectiveness of the program and the feasibility of expanding the
1-49 program statewide.

1-50 (g) This section expires September 1, 2007.

1-51 SECTION 2. If before implementing any provision of this Act
1-52 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
1-53 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
1-54 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
1-55 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
1-56 waiver or authorization is granted.

1-57 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
1-58 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
1-59 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
1-60 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
1-61 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.

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