

AN ACT

relating to prices charged for the provision of health care services.

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

SECTION 1. Section 552.001, Insurance Code, as effective April 1, 2005, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 552.001. APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER. (a) This chapter does not apply to the provision of a health care service to a:

(1) Medicaid or Medicare patient~~+~~ or a patient who is covered by a federal, state, or local government-sponsored indigent health care program;

(2) financially or medically indigent person who qualifies for indigent health care services based on:

(A) a sliding fee scale; or

(B) a written charity care policy established by a health care provider; or

(3) person who is not covered by a health insurance policy or other health benefit plan that provides benefits for the services and qualifies for services for the uninsured based on a written policy established by a health care provider.

(b) This chapter does not permit the establishment of health care provider policies or contracts that violate any other state or federal law.

(c) This chapter does not prohibit a health care provider

1 from entering into a contract to provide services covered by a
2 health insurance policy or other health benefit plan with:

3 (1) the issuer of the health insurance policy or other
4 health benefit plan; or

5 (2) a preferred provider organization that contracts
6 with the issuer of the health insurance policy or other health
7 benefit plan.

8 SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies only
9 to charges for health care services provided on or after the
10 effective date of this Act. Charges for health care services
11 provided before the effective date of this Act are governed by the
12 law in effect immediately before that date, and that law is
13 continued in effect for that purpose.

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

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 500 passed the Senate on April 14, 2005, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 500 passed the House on May 20, 2005, by the following vote: Yeas 139, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor