

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R705 CLG-D

S.B. 24
By: Nelson
Health and Human Services
3/9/2007
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas has large rural areas and a significant number of its counties are designated as areas that are health professional shortage areas or medically underserved or both. Telemedicine allows the use of technology to bring health care providers into these communities. Current Medicaid reimbursement law does not allow doctors to be compensated for office visits provided via telemedicine when they are away from the patient and the patient is with a provider working under this doctor's supervision.

As proposed, S.B. 24 authorizes the Health and Human Services Commission to provide reimbursement under the Medicaid program to a distant physician for office visits when the patient is with a provider working with the physician.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 531.0217, Government Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 531.0217. REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS AND SERVICES.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 531.0217, Government Code, by adding Subsection (c-1), to authorize the Health and Human Services Commission, notwithstanding any other provision of this section, to provide reimbursement under the Medicaid program for a telemedicine medical service provided by a physician who is assessing and evaluating the patient from a distant site under certain conditions. Provides specific requirements for reimbursement.

SECTION 3. Authorizes delay of implementation until any necessary federal waivers or authorizations are obtained.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2007.