

By: Gonzales, Escobar, et al.

H.B. No. 161

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to providing language interpreter services to certain  
3 health care providers.

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

5 SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 12, Health and Safety  
6 Code, is amended by adding Section 12.0151 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 12.0151. INTERPRETER SERVICES. (a) In this section  
8 "health care interpreter" means a person who is trained to orally  
9 communicate with a person whose primary language is Spanish by  
10 accurately conveying the meaning of oral health care related  
11 statements in English and Spanish.

12 (b) The Department of State Health Services shall establish  
13 a toll-free telephone number that is answered by a health care  
14 interpreter 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The health care  
15 interpreter shall provide oral language interpreter services to  
16 physicians, hospital employees, and other health care providers to  
17 assist those individuals in communicating with patients whose  
18 primary language is Spanish.

19 (c) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
20 Services Commission shall adopt rules to implement this section,  
21 including rules establishing the qualifications required for  
22 health care interpreters who answer the toll-free telephone number  
23 established under this section.

24 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2008.