

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a pilot program by the Health and Human Services Commission to accept importation of electronic eligibility information from a regional indigent care provider.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 531.02413 to read as follows:

Sec. 531.02413. ELECTRONIC ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION PILOT PROJECT. (a) The commission shall establish a pilot project in at least one urban area of this state to determine the feasibility, costs, and benefits of accepting, for the purpose of establishing eligibility for benefits under state and federal health and human services programs administered by the commission, the direct importation of electronic eligibility information from an electronic system operated by a regional indigent care collaborative system.

(b) An area selected for the pilot project under this section must possess a functioning indigent care collaborative system that includes a network of providers and assesses eligibility for health and human services programs using electronic systems. The electronic systems used by the collaborative system must be able to interface with electronic systems managed by the commission to enable the commission to import application and eligibility information regarding applicants for health and human

1 services programs.

2 (c) In establishing a pilot project under this section, the
3 commission shall:

4 (1) focus on creating a project in which electronic
5 applications for indigent care created by a regional indigent care
6 network may be shared with the commission to facilitate enrollment
7 in health and human services programs administered by the
8 commission;

9 (2) solicit and obtain support for the project from
10 local officials and indigent care providers;

11 (3) ensure that all identifying and descriptive
12 information of recipients in each health and human services program
13 included in the project can only be accessed by providers or other
14 entities participating in the project; and

15 (4) ensure that the storage and communication of all
16 identifying and descriptive information included in the project
17 complies with existing federal and state privacy laws governing
18 individually identifiable information for recipients of public
19 benefits programs.

20 SECTION 2. Not later than the 180th day after the effective
21 date of this Act, the Health and Human Services Commission shall
22 take action to begin implementation of the pilot project
23 established under Section 531.02413, Government Code, as added by
24 this Act.

25 SECTION 3. Not later than December 1, 2008, the Health and
26 Human Services Commission shall:

27 (1) assess the cost-effectiveness, efficacy,

1 efficiency, and benefits of using electronic eligibility
2 information imported from electronic systems operated by regional
3 indigent care collaborative systems; and

4 (2) report the commission's findings resulting from
5 the pilot project established under Section 531.02413, Government
6 Code, as added by this Act, to the standing committees of the senate
7 and the house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over
8 health and human services issues.

9 SECTION 4. If before implementing any provision of this Act
10 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
11 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
12 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
13 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
14 waiver or authorization is granted.

15 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
16 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
17 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 321 was passed by the House on April 27, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 132, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 321 was passed by the Senate on May 18, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor