

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2369
By: Quintanilla
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Rather than administering its own examination to certify and license emergency medical services personnel, the Department of State Health Services has begun to use a national test given by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. It has been reported that the registry has adopted a policy to require all paramedic training programs to be nationally accredited by January 1, 2013, in order for a student to sit for the paramedic examination.

Obtaining national accreditation can require additional funds, facilities, equipment, faculty, and in some cases affiliation with an institution of higher education. Smaller private programs, many of which train paramedics to serve their local communities, are struggling to meet these requirements, and many such programs will not have the resources necessary for accreditation by the deadline. Other states have asked for an extension of the deadline to meet accreditation requirements.

C.S.H.B. 2369 intends to set the date by which a paramedic education course or training program must be nationally accredited as January 1, 2014, unless the governor's emergency medical services advisory council officially recommends an earlier date.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2369 amends the Health and Safety Code to establish that a paramedic education course or training program is not required to be accredited by a national organization before January 1, 2014, unless, not later than September 1, 2012, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) sets an earlier date in accordance with a recommendation of the advisory council appointed by the governor under the Emergency Health Care Act.

C.S.H.B. 2369 adds a temporary provision, set to expire January 1, 2015, requiring DSHS, not later than January 1, 2013, to partner with a testing entity that administers an examination that qualifies the examinee for licensure as a paramedic. The bill prohibits DSHS from reimbursing the testing entity for administering an examination, but authorizes the entity to charge a fee to an examinee.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 2369 differs from the original by establishing that a paramedic education course or

training program is not required to be accredited by a national organization before January 1, 2014, unless, not later than September 1, 2012, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) sets an earlier date in accordance with a recommendation of the advisory council established under the Emergency Health Care Act, whereas the original prohibits a rule that establishes certain minimum standards regarding emergency medical services courses and training programs from requiring a course or training program to be accredited by a national organization before January 1, 2018.

C.S.H.B. 2369 differs from the original by making its provisions relating to the requirement that DSHS partner with a testing entity that administers an examination that qualifies the examinee for licensure as a paramedic expire January 1, 2015, rather than January 1, 2018, as in the original.