

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 821  
By: Watson  
County Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to a number of sources, Central Texas, like much of the state and the nation, currently has a health care provider shortage that will worsen over the next decade, affecting the quality, cost, and accessibility of health care. To meet the health needs of a growing and aging population, additional nurses and physicians are needed. Recent reports show that Central Texas has fewer than 3,000 physicians for a population of more than one million and that, a decade from now, the region will be 3,000 physicians short of what it needs. Such a shortage will affect not only those who have private health insurance and those who may qualify for Medicaid, but also current Medicare beneficiaries and the tens of thousands of people who will age into Medicare in the coming years.

In the recent past, the Central Texas community has aggressively pursued an increase in medical education to address this need and to assist in the provision of needed health care in the growing community. The coordinated efforts have illuminated the need for leveraging all potential tools and sources of help. To assist in this, S.B. 821 seeks to establish provisions relating to the authority of certain hospital districts to make capital or financial contributions to certain public institutions or charitable organizations in order to allow such districts to work with other organizations in the community to increase health care education for the purpose of delivery of health care services in the districts.

### **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**

S.B. 821 amends the Health and Safety Code to authorize a hospital district created in a county with a population of more than 800,000 that was not included in the boundaries of a hospital district before September 1, 2003, to make a capital or other financial contribution to a public institution or a charitable organization for the support of medical, dental, or clinical education, training, or research occurring within the district for the purpose of delivery of health care services to or for the district, provided that the public institution or charitable organization receiving the capital or financial contribution does not use any part of the funding, either directly or indirectly, to provide or refer for abortion or abortion-related services, in addition to the statutory authority such a district has to make a capital or other financial contribution to a charitable organization created by the district to provide regional administration and delivery of health care services to or for the district.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

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