

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1265
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Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Observers have recently been discussing the availability of high-quality paramedic training programs in urban and rural areas of Texas. S.B. 1265 seeks to address this issue by amending current law relating to the accreditation of paramedic training programs.

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. 1265 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to post on the department's Internet website information related to the accreditation process for a paramedic training program, including a schedule of workshops and online seminars related to the accreditation process. The bill requires DSHS, in awarding local project grant funds intended for paramedic training programs, to give priority to paramedic training programs that serve a rural area of the state, serve an area of the state along the international border, are financially sound but have a demonstrated need for financial help to become accredited, or are unable to enter into a consortium agreement because of geographic location.

S.B. 1265 requires the advisory council appointed by the governor under the Emergency Health Care Act to coordinate with DSHS and the Texas Department of Rural Affairs to study the effect that a national accreditation requirement would have on private paramedic training programs, the availability of paramedic training programs in rural areas of the state, and the availability of paramedics in rural areas of the state and areas of the state along the international border. The bill requires the study to evaluate the options for accrediting paramedic training program providers in Texas, including examining the requirements in other states relating to paramedic training programs. The bill requires the advisory council, not later than September 1, 2012, to report to the legislature the findings of the study and the council's recommendations regarding paramedic training that will increase the availability of high-quality paramedic training programs in urban and rural areas of Texas. The bill establishes that its provisions expire September 1, 2013.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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