

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2533  
By: Zerwas  
Insurance  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Hemophilia is a rare bleeding disorder, usually inherited, in which the blood does not clot properly. Individuals affected by this disorder have an increased risk for brain trauma, serious bruising, or internal bleeding in joints or muscles. To avoid these risks, individuals with this and similar bleeding disorders must strictly adhere to their treatment plans, which involve intravenous infusions of blood clotting factor concentrates. Interested parties assert that these treatments often cost in excess of \$250,000 per year.

The Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) hemophilia assistance program provides assistance in purchasing clotting factor products for eligible low-income Texans with an applicable blood disorder. Interested parties assert that the program currently provides benefits to only a handful of individuals, due in part to the high costs of these products. These parties further contend that expanding the assistance options the program is authorized to provide would allow a larger population to be served in a more cost-effective manner. H.B. 2533 seeks to provide such an expansion.

### **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**

Section 531.0055, Government Code, as amended by Chapter 198 (H.B. 2292), Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, expressly grants to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission all rulemaking authority for the operation of and provision of services by the health and human services agencies. Similarly, Sections 1.16-1.29, Chapter 198 (H.B. 2292), Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, provide for the transfer of a power, duty, function, program, or activity from a health and human services agency abolished by that act to the corresponding legacy agency. To the extent practical, this bill analysis is written to reflect any transfer of rulemaking authority and to update references as necessary to an agency's authority with respect to a particular health and human services program.

H.B. 2533 amends the Health and Safety Code to authorize the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in addition to providing the required financial assistance to certain medically eligible persons with hemophilia under the hemophilia assistance program, to assist an eligible person in obtaining insurance by providing premium payment assistance. The bill requires the eligibility standards established by DSHS for assistance under the hemophilia assistance program to provide that a person 18 years of age or older who meets all other eligibility criteria for assistance under the program is eligible for assistance under the program and establishes that a person is not ineligible to receive such services solely because the person receives benefits through the Texas Health Insurance Pool.

H.B. 2533 amends the Insurance Code to establish that an individual is eligible for coverage

from the Texas Health Insurance Pool if the individual receives financial assistance under the hemophilia assistance program.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.