

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1661
By: Guerra
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Informed observers note that a physician with Medicaid credentials in Texas can work in any office location in the state with one Medicaid number, but a dentist's Medicaid credentials are linked to a specific office location. Concerns have been raised that credentialing can take weeks to obtain and that this requirement creates unnecessary obstacles for a dentist who is unexpectedly in need of a replacement dentist because of a physical illness, an injury, or a call to active duty with the military. As a result, a dentist's Medicaid patients may have to find another dentist at a different office location, which can lead to patients not getting treatment in a timely manner. H.B. 1661 seeks to allow better access to dental care for Medicaid patients.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1661 amends the Human Resources Code to require the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission, as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date and to the extent allowed by federal law, to adopt rules ensuring that the same standards that apply to a physician who bills Medicaid for services provided by a substitute physician also apply to a dentist who bills Medicaid for services provided by a substitute dentist.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.