

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 935
By: Zerwas
Appropriations
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties assert that emergency medical air transportation is an essential part of the state's emergency medical services system and plays a key role in disaster response and homeland security but that funding this essential service is uncertain because some patients have no insurance, are not Medicaid eligible, or are unable to pay for the service. H.B. 935 seeks to address this issue by creating an emergency medical air transportation account composed of money deposited to the credit of the account from state traffic fines.

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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 935 amends the Health and Safety Code to establish the emergency medical air transportation account as a dedicated account in the general revenue fund to be composed of money deposited to the credit of the account from state traffic fines as provided by the bill and interest earned on the investment of money in the account and depository interest allocable to the account. The bill authorizes the commissioner of state health services to use the money appropriated from the account to provide funding, in addition to funding available from other sources, for emergency medical air transportation and authorizes the commissioner, after consulting with the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission, to transfer the money appropriated from the account to the Health and Human Services Commission for the purposes of providing Medicaid reimbursements to providers of emergency medical air transportation services and, to the extent possible, maximizing the receipt of federal Medicaid funds. The bill restricts the appropriation of money in the account to the Department of State Health Services for those purposes only.

H.B. 935 amends the Transportation Code to decrease from 67 percent to 50 percent the percentage of the money received by the comptroller of public accounts from state traffic fines required to be deposited to the credit of the undedicated portion of the general revenue fund and to require the comptroller to deposit 17 percent of the money received by the comptroller from state traffic fines to the credit of the emergency medical air transportation account.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.

