

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 919  
By: Rodríguez  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties contend that the inability of advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants to sign death certificates results in unnecessary delays. S.B. 919 seeks to address this issue by authorizing an advanced practice registered nurse and a physician assistant to complete the medical certification for a death certificate or fetal death certificate under certain circumstances.

### **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**

S.B. 919 amends the Health and Safety Code to include a physician assistant and an advanced practice registered nurse of a decedent among the persons from whom a person required to file a death certificate or fetal death certificate for a death that occurred under the care of one of such persons in connection with the treatment of the condition or disease process that contributed to the death is required to obtain the required medical certification. The bill conditions the authority of a physician assistant and an advanced practice registered nurse to complete the medical certification for a death certificate or fetal death certificate on a patient receiving palliative care or a patient who has executed a written certification of a terminal illness electing to receive hospice care and receiving hospice services from a qualified hospice provider. The bill requires the physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse to complete the medical certification not later than five days after receiving the death certificate. The bill includes such a physician assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse among the persons whose unavailability and approval in part triggers the authorization for an associate physician, the chief medical officer of the institution where the death occurred, or the physician who performed an autopsy on the decedent to complete the medical certification. The bill specifies that a registered nurse who is authorized to determine and pronounce a person dead in certain situations if permitted by certain written policies of a licensed health care facility, institution, or entity providing services to that person and who is not liable for civil damages or subject to criminal prosecution for the registered nurse's actions or the actions of others based on the determination of death includes an advanced practice registered nurse.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2017.