

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 922  
By: Buckingham  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties note that in many parts of Texas, especially in rural areas, not enough professionals are available to provide students with certain therapy and counseling services. As a result, school districts and charter schools are often required to spend significant tax dollars to contract with providers from other areas to deliver those services. S.B. 922 seeks to provide Medicaid reimbursement for these districts and schools under certain conditions to reduce financial burdens and ensure that students living in rural or underserved areas have increased accessibility to the therapy services they need to thrive.

### **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. 922 amends the Government Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission to ensure that Medicaid reimbursement is provided to a public school district or open-enrollment charter school for telehealth services provided through the district or charter school by a health professional, even if the health professional is not the patient's primary care provider, if the district or charter school is an authorized health care provider under Medicaid and the parent or legal guardian of the patient provides consent before the service is provided. The bill defines "health professional" as an individual who is licensed, registered, certified, or otherwise authorized by the state to practice as a social worker, occupational therapist, or speech-language pathologist; a licensed professional counselor; or a licensed specialist in school psychology.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2017.