

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1879
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Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Studies indicate that Texas has one of the highest uninsured rates for women in the country and that approximately one-half of all pregnancies are unintended. It has been suggested that increasing health care coverage for women may reduce unintended pregnancies. C.S.H.B. 1879 seeks to address this issue by providing for the automatic enrollment of certain women in Medicaid and the Healthy Texas Women program.

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

C.S.H.B. 1879 amends the Government Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), subject to the eligibility requirements of the Healthy Texas Women program, to identify and automatically enroll in the program a woman who is a Medicaid recipient or enrollee in the child health plan program (CHIP) but who will lose eligibility for benefits under the applicable program because of the woman's age. The bill requires the automatic enrollment to be implemented in a manner that ensures a seamless transition in the provision of services and allows a woman to begin receiving services through the Healthy Texas Women program on the first day the woman is no longer eligible for Medicaid or CHIP. The bill requires HHSC to provide to a woman who is automatically enrolled in the Healthy Texas Women program written notice of the enrollment, information about the program, and instructions on how to disenroll. The bill requires the executive commissioner of HHSC to adopt rules necessary to implement this automatic enrollment in the Healthy Texas Women program.

C.S.H.B. 1879 requires HHSC to identify and automatically enroll in Medicaid a woman who becomes pregnant while receiving services through the Healthy Texas Women program and who is eligible for Medicaid. The bill includes the same requirements with regard to automatic enrollment in Medicaid as with automatic enrollment in the Healthy Texas Women program relating to seamless transition of services, notice of enrollment, information about the applicable program, and instructions on disenrolling. The bill requires the executive commissioner to adopt rules necessary to implement the automatic enrollment in Medicaid.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1879 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include a requirement for HHSC to identify and automatically enroll an eligible woman who becomes pregnant while receiving services through the Healthy Texas Women program in the CHIP perinatal program.