87R8252 KKR-D

By:  Shine H.B. No. 2247

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a demonstration program at the State Office of Risk Management for real-time processing of workers' compensation authorizations of payment for medical services and medical bills.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Subchapter B, Chapter 412, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 412.0129 to read as follows:

Sec. 412.0129.  AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENT FOR MEDICAL SERVICES AND MEDICAL BILLS REAL-TIME PROCESSING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM. (a) The office may develop and implement a demonstration program for processing workers' compensation authorizations of payment for medical services and medical bills in real time if the office determines that the program would be cost-effective.

(b)  The demonstration program described by Subsection (a) must include:

(1)  a secure single platform, Internet-based portal for use by the office, state agencies, injured employees, and health care providers;

(2)  the ability to collect, input, and transmit administrative and clinical data, including:

(A)  patient information;

(B)  health care provider contracts;

(C)  treatment guidelines; and

(D)  other information the office considers necessary for processing authorizations and medical bills;

(3)  an automated process to streamline requests for authorizations of payment for medical services and peer reviews at the point of care; and

(4)  return-to-work best practices for workers' compensation claims, including complex case management.

(c)  The workers' compensation research and evaluation group may assist the office in identifying and adopting measures for evaluating the demonstration program.

(d)  The evaluation period for the demonstration program shall end on June 30, 2024.

(e)  If the office implements a demonstration program under this section, not later than December 31, 2024, the office shall provide to the board a report that:

(1)  evaluates the program, including any effects of the program on administrative cost savings;

(2)  recommends whether to use the process implemented under the program on a permanent basis; and

(3)  if the office determines administrative cost savings were not achieved by the process implemented under the program, includes:

(A)  the reasons that the program did not result in administrative cost savings; and

(B)  recommendations for proposed legislation to develop a cost-effective system for processing workers' compensation authorizations of payment for medical services and medical bills in real time.

(f)  If the report of the demonstration program under Subsection (e) indicates that administrative cost savings are achieved by the process implemented under the program, the board may adopt and use the process on a permanent basis.

(g)  This section expires September 1, 2025.

SECTION 2.  Not later than January 1, 2022, the State Office of Risk Management shall study and make a determination as to whether the demonstration program described by Section 412.0129, Labor Code, as added by this Act, would be cost-effective. If the office determines the program would be cost-effective and decides to implement the program, the office shall fully implement the program not later than January 1, 2023.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.