

PUBLIC COMMENTS

SB 73

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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Hearing Date: May 4, 2021 8:00 AM

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Jennifer Smith, Executive Director

Texas Association of City and County Health Officials

Austin, TX

The Texas Association of City and County Health Officials (TACCHO) is the member association of local public health entities, whose 45 members jurisdictional representation covers over 80% of the Texas population to provide public health services in local communities.

TACCHO recommends that the Health and Human Services Commission develop a provider type designation for Local Health Departments, mandating contractual agreements with Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) which will assure adequate reimbursement and establishes a set of activities, "Public Health Services", for reimbursement.

Senate Bill 73 provides the authority for the HHSC to develop this provider type designation.

- a. LHDs have experienced success as direct providers for Medicaid, however, there are significant barriers to participate as part of MCO provider networks.
- b. SB 73 aims to assure fair compensation for primary care services provided by Local Health Departments. SB 73 instructs HHSC to establish a designated provider type for Local Health Departments. Experience has shown that even when services are covered by insurance, certain vulnerable populations continue to seek access and services through Local Health Departments. As an example, Houston Health Department provides concentrated blood lead level screening for those who have not been previously tested, even though it is outlined as a mandatory primary care activity.
- c. SB 73 is NOT an expansion of Medicaid. Dollars are already allocated to MCOs to cover Medicaid patients; this bill just make sure Local Health Departments can access those dollars for primary care services for Medicaid patients.
- d. SB 73 would strengthen our states public health network and provide relief to local taxpayers, who currently cover ALL Local Health Department services.

You may contact Craig Holzheuser at [craig@cgagroup.com](mailto:craig@cgagroup.com) for additional information.

Go to <https://www.taccho.org/member-organizations> for a list of the TACCHO Membership.