

By: Thierry

H.B. No. 465

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a pilot program to provide Medicaid coverage of doula services.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 32, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 32.02481 to read as follows:

Sec. 32.02481. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM FOR DOULA SERVICES. (a) In this section:

(1) "Doula" means a nonmedical birthing coach who provides doula services and meets the qualifications for a doula as determined by commission rule.

(2) "Doula services" means nonmedical childbirth education, coaching, and support services, including emotional and physical support provided during pregnancy, labor, delivery, and the postpartum period, or provided intermittently during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

(b) The commission shall establish a pilot program to provide medical assistance reimbursement for doula services provided by a doula. The executive commissioner, in consultation with the Perinatal Advisory Council established under Section 241.187, Health and Safety Code, by rule shall determine the qualifications necessary for an individual to be considered a doula and the doula services to be covered under the pilot program.

(c) Not later than September 1, 2024, the commission shall

implement the pilot program in:

(1) the most populous county in this state; and

(2) the county with the greatest maternal health support needs, as determined by the county's maternal and infant mortality rates and the number of births in the county by Medicaid recipients.

(d) The commission shall prescribe eligibility requirements for participation in the pilot program.

(e) Not later than September 1 of each year during the operation of the pilot program, the commission shall prepare and publish on the commission's Internet website a report evaluating:

(1) the total costs during the preceding year of providing medical assistance reimbursement for doula services under the pilot program; and

(2) the impact on birth outcomes for women who receive doula services under the pilot program.

(f) Not later than September 1, 2028, the commission shall prepare and submit to the legislature a written report that:

(1) summarizes the results of the pilot program, including the effectiveness of the pilot program in reducing maternal mortality rates and racial disparities in health outcomes in the geographic areas of this state in which the pilot program operates;

(2) includes feedback from participating doulas and recipients who received doula services under the pilot program; and

(3) includes a recommendation on whether the pilot program should be continued, expanded, or terminated.

1 (g) The pilot program terminates and this section expires
2 September 1, 2029.

3 SECTION 2. Notwithstanding Section 32.02481(e), Human
4 Resources Code, as added by this Act, the Health and Human Services
5 Commission shall prepare and publish the first report required by
6 that section not later than September 1, 2025.

7 SECTION 3. If before implementing any provision of this Act
8 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
9 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
10 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
11 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
12 waiver or authorization is granted.

13 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.