

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 672
By: Hughes
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A diversion plan is a hospital's process for temporarily routing patients to other facilities when the hospital's capacity is significantly diminished, potentially leading to delayed care and worse health outcomes. However, the bill sponsor has informed the committee that the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which oversees hospitals in Texas, does not have information on the diversion plans used for patients and ambulances in emergency departments. S.B. 672 seeks to address this gap in information by requiring licensed hospitals that regularly provide emergency services to submit to HHSC a written summary of the part of the hospital's emergency operations plan that addresses diversions from the hospital's emergency department in the event that the hospital experiences a cyber attack or an electrical power outage.

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. 672 amends the Health and Safety Code to require a hospital licensed under the Texas Hospital Licensing Law that has an emergency department or otherwise regularly provides emergency services to submit to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) a written summary of the part of the hospital's emergency operations plan that addresses diversions from the hospital's emergency department in the event that the hospital experiences a cyber attack or an electrical power outage. The bill requires such a hospital, if the hospital makes changes to that part of the plan, to update the previously submitted summary and submit the updated summary to HHSC not later than the 30th day after the date the changes to the plan are adopted by the hospital's governing body or otherwise approved by the appropriate hospital administrator. The bill establishes that such a summary is confidential and excepted from public disclosure under state public information law.

S.B. 672 requires an applicable hospital to comply with the requirements of the bill's provisions not later than December 1, 2025.

S.B. 672 defines "emergency operations plan" as a hospital's process for temporarily routing patients in need of emergency services to other hospitals or health facilities during a period when:

- the hospital's capacity to provide emergency services to those patients is significantly diminished; and

- the patients, if routed to the hospital, would likely receive substantially delayed care resulting in worse health outcomes than would otherwise occur were the patient routed to another hospital or health facility.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.