

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R2398 JRD-D

S.B. 1763
By: Moncrief
Health & Human Services
4/6/2001
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, many pharmaceutical manufacturers operate patient assistance programs to provide free or reduced cost medications to patients who cannot afford the medications and meet certain qualifying criteria. However, these programs are not widely publicized and many patients and physicians do not know how to access them or know the eligibility requirements. As proposed, S.B. 1763 requires each pharmaceutical manufacturer in Texas which has such a program to provide information about the program to the Texas Department of Health (department). Requires the department to then operate a toll-free telephone number to assist patients with finding and applying for such programs and publicize the number to prescribers and pharmacies.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 161, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subchapter Q, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER Q. PROVISION OF INFORMATION ABOUT PATIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Sec. 161.381. DEFINITION. Defines “patient assistance program.”

Sec. 161.382. PROVIDING INFORMATION TO DEPARTMENT. Requires each pharmaceutical company that does business in this state and that offers a patient assistance program to inform the Texas Department of Health (department) of the existence of the program, the eligibility requirements for the program, the drugs covered by the program, and information such as a telephone number used for applying for the program.

Sec. 161.383. TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER. Requires the department to establish a system under which members of the public can call a toll-free telephone number to obtain information about available patient assistance programs. Requires the department to ensure that the system is staffed at least during normal business hours with persons with certain capabilities. Requires the department to publicize the telephone number to pharmacies and prescribers of drugs.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2001.