

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 292
By: Nelson
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

One of the lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ike is the importance of communicating with critical personnel during natural disasters. In recognition of the key role physicians play in times of emergency, the Texas Medical Board (TMB) needs to be able to contact its physician-licensees in times of emergency.

As proposed, S.B. 292 requires a licensed physician to provide and update e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, and fax numbers to TMB that TMB may use to contact its licensees in an emergency. S.B. 292 exempts such information from disclosure under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code, and prohibits its use for any reason other than contacting the physician in a public health emergency.

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 Subchapter A, Chapter 156, Occupations Code, by adding Section 156.006, as follows:

Sec. 156.006. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION. (a) Requires each license holder to submit to the Texas Medical Board (TMB) telephone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses, if available and as appropriate, that TMB is authorized to use to contact the license holder in an emergency.

(b) Requires a license holder who receives an initial registration permit to provide the information required under Subsection (a) not later than the 30th day after the date the permit is issued. Requires each license holder who applies to renew a registration permit to submit the information required under Subsection (a) with the renewal application.

(c) Requires a license holder to report to TMB any change in the information required under Subsection (a) not later than the 45th day after the date of the change.

(d) Provides that the information provided by a license holder under this section is confidential and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code. Prohibits TMB from publishing, releasing, or making available information provided by a license holder under this section except as provided by Subsection (e).

(e) Authorizes TMB, in the event of a public health emergency declared or invoked by the governor, the Department of State Health Services, or a federal agency, to publish, release, or make available information provided by a license holder under this section for the sole purpose of disseminating information to a license holder, a designated city, county, state, or federal public health or emergency management official, or the Federation of State Medical Boards.

SECTION 2. Requires each person who holds a license to practice medicine under Chapter 155 (License to Practice Medicine), Occupations Code, to make the initial submission to TMB of the information required by Section 156.006(a), Occupations Code, as added by this Act, not later than December 1, 2009.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2009.