

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 674
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Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas has a severe shortage of psychiatrists. A report required by the 83rd Legislature noted that as of September 2013, only 1,933 psychiatrists were actively licensed and offering direct care in Texas. Additionally, five of Texas' most populous counties had 63 percent of the state's psychiatrists but only 43 percent of the total population.

Furthermore, as of January 1, 2015, over two-thirds of Texas' counties were designated as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas. Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas are defined as a geographic area with a ratio of 30,000 people to one psychiatrist.

S.B. 674 alleviates this issue by creating an expedited licensing process for out-of-state psychiatrists. Specifically, S.B. 674 requires the Texas Medical Board to create an expedited licensing process for applicants who hold an unrestricted license to practice medicine issued in another state, are board certified in psychiatry, and meet other general eligibility requirements.

As proposed, S.B. 674 amends current law relating to an expedited licensing process for certain physicians specializing in psychiatry and authorizes a fee.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Medical Board in SECTION 1 (Section 155.010, Occupations Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 155, Occupations Code, by adding Section 155.010, as follows:

Sec. 155.010. EXPEDITED LICENSING PROCESS FOR PHYSICIANS SPECIALIZING IN PSYCHIATRY. (a) Requires the Texas Medical Board (TMB) to create an expedited licensing process for an applicant who holds an unrestricted license to practice medicine issued by another state, is board certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology or the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry, and is not ineligible under Section 155.003(e) (relating to an applicant's ineligibility for a license under certain circumstances).

(b) Requires the expedited licensing process to include a procedure for TMB to screen applications under this subtitle (Physicians) to determine whether an applicant would be eligible for the expedited licensing process.

(c) Provides that the renewal of a registration permit for a license holder issued a license under this section is governed by Chapter 156 (Registration of Physicians).

(d) Authorizes TMB to establish a fee for the expedited process.

(e) Provides that this section expires January 1, 2022.

SECTION 2. Requires TMB to create and implement the expedited licensing process under Section 155.010, Occupations Code, as added by this Act, not later than January 1, 2018.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.