

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 21, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 845

Introduced by Assembly Member Cooley

February 26, 2015

An act to add Section 100522 to the Government Code, relating to health care coverage.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 845, as amended, Cooley. Health care coverage: vision care.

Existing law, the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), requires each state to establish an American Health Benefits Exchange to facilitate the purchase of qualified health plans by qualified individuals and small employers. PPACA prohibits an Exchange from making available any health plan other than a qualified health plan, except for certain stand-alone dental plans. Existing state law establishes the California Health Benefit Exchange within state government, specifies the powers and duties of the board governing the Exchange, and requires the board to facilitate the purchase of qualified health plans through the Exchange by qualified individuals and small employers by January 1, 2014.

This bill would authorize the executive board that governs the California Health Benefit Exchange to construct, manage, and maintain an Internet Web site that is separate and clearly distinct from the Exchange’s Internet Web site, to inform consumers about participating individual and employer-based vision plans that are available to qualified individuals and qualified employers. The bill would authorize the board to receive funds from providers of ancillary vision care products and any other nongovernmental source for this purpose. The bill would

prohibit federal funds and user fees and other assessments imposed for purposes of the Exchange from being used for this purpose. The bill would require the Internet Web site to provide certain information, including the fact that enrollment in a vision plan does not constitute enrollment in a qualified health plan or enrollment through the Exchange. *The bill would also require the Internet Web site to facilitate an option for consumers to obtain more information about, and enrollment in, a vision plan through a licensed agent, as specified.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 100522 is added to the Government Code,
2 to read:
3 100522. (a) The board may construct, manage, and maintain
4 an Internet Web site that is separate and clearly distinct from the
5 Internet Web site established by the Exchange, to inform consumers
6 about participating individual and employer-based vision plans
7 that are available to qualified individuals and qualified employers.
8 The board may receive funds from providers of ancillary vision
9 care products and any other nongovernmental source for this
10 purpose. Federal funds, user fees, and other assessments imposed
11 for purposes of the Exchange shall not be used for this purpose,
12 and other federal and state funds shall not be commingled with
13 funds that are made available for this purpose.
14 (b) The Internet Web site constructed pursuant to subdivision
15 (a) shall offer full and complete carrier information to consumers
16 and shall allow enrollees and prospective enrollees to obtain
17 standardized comparative information on the participating vision
18 plans. If a telephone number is provided to provide additional
19 information regarding a vision plan, that telephone number shall
20 be a different telephone number than the telephone number
21 provided to receive information regarding products offered through
22 the Exchange.
23 (c) The Internet Web site constructed pursuant to subdivision
24 (a) shall provide, at a minimum, the following information to
25 visitors to the Internet Web site:
26 (1) An explanation of the types of coverage offered.

1 (2) ~~The fact that the~~ *The* vision plan is a separate, legally distinct
2 entity from the Exchange.

3 (3) ~~The fact that enrollment~~ *Enrollment* in a vision plan does
4 not constitute enrollment in a qualified health plan or enrollment
5 through the Exchange.

6 (4) ~~The fact that advance~~ *Advance* payment of premium tax
7 credit and cost-sharing reductions are not available for a vision
8 plan.

9 (5) *Pediatric vision care is an essential health benefit covered*
10 *by the consumer's health care service plan or health insurer.*

11 (d) *The Internet Web site constructed pursuant to subdivision*
12 *(a) shall facilitate an option for consumers to obtain more*
13 *information about, and enrollment in, a vision plan through a*
14 *licensed agent, as described in Section 1626 of the Insurance Code.*