

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1544

Introduced by Committee on Health (Jones (Chair), Fletcher (Vice Chair), Adams, Ammiano, Block, Carter, Conway, De La Torre, Emmerson, Hayashi, Hernandez, Bonnie Lowenthal, Nava, V. Manuel Perez, Salas, and Audra Strickland)

March 4, 2009

An act to add Section 1253.6 to the Health and Safety Code, relating to health facilities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1544, as introduced, Committee on Health. Health facilities: licensure.

Existing law provides for the licensure of health facilities, including general acute care hospitals, acute psychiatric hospitals, and special hospitals, as defined, by the State Department of Public Health. Violation of these provisions is a misdemeanor.

Existing law requires that, upon the issuance or renewal of a general acute care, acute psychiatric, or special hospital license, the department separately identify on the license each supplemental service, including the address of where each outpatient service is provided and the type of services provided at each outpatient location.

Existing law authorizes licensed general acute care hospitals and acute psychiatric hospitals to provide in any alternative setting health care services and programs that may be provided by any other provider of health care outside of a hospital building or which are not otherwise specifically prohibited by provisions of existing law regulating these facilities. It also requires the state department and the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to adopt and enforce

standards which permit these health facilities to use its space for alternative purposes.

This bill would, among other things, require the department to approve a completed application by a licensed general acute care hospital, acute psychiatric hospital, or a special hospital that meets specified requirements to add or modify an outpatient service as a supplemental service, add the outpatient service to the hospital license, and issue a new license, within 30 days of receipt of the completed application, unless the applicant does not meet specified requirements. The bill would require the outpatient service that is the subject of the application to provide primary health care service to patients who remain in the outpatient clinic for less than 24 hours. The bill would also prohibit the outpatient service that is the subject of the application from providing chronic dialysis treatment or alternative birthing services or performing outpatient surgeries that are provided by a surgical clinic. By creating a new crime, this bill would impose a state mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

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

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

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) Hospitals in California are essential partners with the state
- 4 in providing a health care safety net for underserved, uninsured,
- 5 and underinsured populations in a cost-effective manner.
- 6 (b) The need for primary care is growing dramatically due to
- 7 changes in the delivery of health care, demands of the market, and
- 8 the continuing increase of uninsured and underinsured patients in
- 9 California, an escalating unemployment rate, physician shortage,
- 10 and a severely depressed economy.
- 11 (c) The current system of approving new hospital-based
- 12 outpatient services that provide primary care causes delays in
- 13 timely access to care and results in a significant and unnecessary

1 waste of taxpayer and community resources that could otherwise
2 be devoted to patient care.

3 (d) Administrative streamlining of the approval process, without
4 compromising patient health and safety, will avoid unnecessary
5 burden to the state's scarce resources and improve access to vital
6 community health care services in California.

7 SEC. 2. Section 1253.6 is added to the Health and Safety Code,
8 to read:

9 1253.6. (a) Upon receipt of an initial application by a licensed
10 general acute care hospital, acute psychiatric hospital, or a special
11 hospital that meets the requirements of subdivision (c) to add a
12 new or modify an existing outpatient service as a supplemental
13 service, the department shall, within 30 days of receipt of the initial
14 application, review the entire application, determine whether the
15 application is missing information or has insufficient information,
16 and, on the basis of this determination, provide the hospital with
17 guidance on how to provide the missing information.

18 (b) Within 30 days after receipt of a completed application by
19 a licensed general acute care hospital, acute psychiatric hospital,
20 or a special hospital that meets the requirements of subdivision (c)
21 to add or modify an outpatient service as a supplemental service,
22 the department shall approve the additional or modified outpatient
23 service, add it to the hospital license, and issue a new license,
24 unless the applicant does not meet the requirements of this section.
25 Notwithstanding any other law, the issuance of a new license
26 pursuant to this section shall not require an initial onsite survey.
27 If the department determines that the applicant does not meet the
28 requirements of this section, the department shall provide the
29 hospital, in writing, the particular basis for this determination.

30 (c) A hospital qualifies to submit an application pursuant to this
31 section only if both of the following conditions are met:

32 (1) The hospital has held for the five years immediately
33 preceding the submission of the completed application, a valid,
34 unrevoked or unsuspended license, does not have a demonstrated
35 history of repeated or uncorrected violations of state licensing or
36 federal certification requirements that pose immediate jeopardy
37 to a patient, and does not have any pending actions against it to
38 suspend or revoke the license or terminate Medicare or Medi-Cal
39 certification.

1 (2) The hospital owns and operates the outpatient service that
2 is the subject of the application.

3 (d) A completed application for purposes of this section shall
4 include all of the following:

5 (1) The appropriate forms, fees, and documentation, as
6 determined by the department.

7 (2) A description of the type of outpatient service to be operated,
8 the character and scope of the service to be provided, and a
9 complete description of the building, its location and proximity to
10 the main hospital building, facilities, equipment, apparatus, and
11 appliances to be furnished and used in the operation of the
12 outpatient service.

13 (3) A description of and sufficient evidence that the outpatient
14 service has written policies and procedures governing the operation
15 of the service and its reporting relationship to the applicant.

16 (4) Evidence of the hospital's compliance with applicable
17 building standards and possession of a fire clearance.

18 (e) The outpatient service that is the subject of the application
19 shall provide primary health care service to patients who remain
20 in the outpatient clinic for less than 24 hours.

21 (f) The outpatient service that is the subject of the application
22 shall not provide chronic dialysis treatment or alternative birthing
23 services or perform outpatient surgeries that are provided by a
24 surgical clinic.

25 (g) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the department from
26 conducting a licensing inspection or complaint investigation after
27 receipt of the completed application.

28 SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to
29 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because
30 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school
31 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or
32 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty
33 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of
34 the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within
35 the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California
36 Constitution.