

1-1 By: Taylor of Galveston, Hall S.B. No. 684
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 23, 2015; February 24, 2015,
 1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Business and Commerce;
 1-4 April 21, 2015, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 7,
 1-5 Nays 0; April 21, 2015, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7	X			
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13			X	
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16			X	

1-17 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
 1-18 AN ACT

1-19 relating to the designation of certain optometrists, therapeutic
 1-20 optometrists, and ophthalmologists as preferred providers.

1-21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-22 SECTION 1. Section 1301.051(e), Insurance Code, is amended
 1-23 to read as follows:

1-24 (e) An insurer may not withhold a designation to:
 1-25 (1) a podiatrist described by Section 1301.0521; or
 1-26 (2) an optometrist, therapeutic optometrist, or
 1-27 ophthalmologist described by Section 1301.0522.

1-28 SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 1301, Insurance Code, is
 1-29 amended by adding Section 1301.0522 to read as follows:

1-30 Sec. 1301.0522. DESIGNATION OF CERTAIN OPTOMETRISTS,
 1-31 THERAPEUTIC OPTOMETRISTS, AND OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AS PREFERRED
 1-32 PROVIDERS. (a) Notwithstanding Section 1301.051, an insurer may
 1-33 not withhold the designation of preferred provider to an
 1-34 optometrist or therapeutic optometrist licensed by the Texas
 1-35 Optometry Board or an ophthalmologist licensed by the Texas Medical
 1-36 Board who:

1-37 (1) joins the professional practice of a contracted
 1-38 preferred provider;

1-39 (2) applies to the insurer for designation as a
 1-40 preferred provider; and

1-41 (3) complies with the terms and conditions of
 1-42 eligibility to be a preferred provider.

1-43 (b) An optometrist, therapeutic optometrist, or
 1-44 ophthalmologist designated as a preferred provider under this
 1-45 section must comply with the terms of the preferred provider
 1-46 contract used by the insurer or the insurer's network provider.

1-47 SECTION 3. Section 1301.0522, Insurance Code, as added by
 1-48 this Act, applies only to a contract between a preferred provider
 1-49 and an insurer that is entered into or renewed on or after September
 1-50 1, 2015. A contract between a preferred provider and an insurer
 1-51 that is entered into or renewed before September 1, 2015, is
 1-52 governed by the law as it existed immediately before the effective
 1-53 date of this Act, and that law is continued in effect for that
 1-54 purpose.

1-55 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

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