



Physicians Caring for Texans

House Insurance Committee
Testimony by Pradeep Kumar, MD, Texas Medical Association
House Bill 3351 (Ranking and Tiering) by Rep. Caroline Harris
March 28, 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chair Johnson, and committee members, for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dr. Pradeep Kumar, and I am a gastroenterologist in Austin. I will be testifying on behalf of TMA and its more than 57,000 members across the state of Texas, in respectful opposition to House Bill 3351.

We understand and support the author's intent to promote transparency and empower patients to shop for affordable insurance coverage. However, this bill seeks to accomplish that goal in a way that would create an imbalanced process that lacks accountability and could create confusion for patients and physicians.

Allow me to provide background on this issue. In 2009, the Texas Legislature passed HB 1888 to require all insurers that adopt physician ranking systems to meet nationally recognized standards and guidelines for performance measurement, reporting, and tiering programs to ensure fairness, consistency, and efficiency. That bill, which is current law, included provisions requiring physicians to be notified in advance of the methodology an insurer would use to rank them, as well as a process by which physicians could appeal the rankings.

HB 3351 would repeal these provisions, allowing insurers to rank and classify physicians by tier without letting doctors know how they're being graded, and without giving them any recourse if there is a dispute or discrepancy in the rankings. These provisions in current law protect doctors from unfair ranking practices while enhancing consumer access to accurate and reliable information on physician quality.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose HB 3351. Again, thank you Mr. Chairman and committee members, for allowing me to testify today. I appreciate your work and I am happy to answer any questions.