



# RYAN GUILLEN

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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
ALEX.GAUDIO@HOUSE.TEXAS.GOV

## **GUILLEN HELPS RURAL HOSPITALS CARE FOR CHILDREN** *H.B. 1697 Helps Rural Texans Access Healthcare*

**AUSTIN** - H.B. 1697, which Representative Ryan Guillen (D- Rural South Texas) co-authored, will help rural hospitals by creating a grant program that they can use to purchase telemedicine equipment and contract with pediatricians.

**"Sick children from rural South Texas communities shouldn't have to travel hundreds of miles just to see the doctor and receive the care they need," said Guillen.**

H.B. 1697 will help to create telemedicine connections between pediatric specialists and rural hospitals so that sick children won't always have to be transferred to larger facilities in major cities to receive care. Telemedicine is a growing field where the doctor does not have to be physically present to provide care. Instead, the doctor and hospital set up a video connection allowing the doctor to see the patient from anywhere in the world, assess what needs to be done, and assist local doctors in providing the care. This can greatly reduce the need for rural patients to travel to big city hospitals.

The measure creates a grant program that would provide funds to rural health care facilities who want to establish a connection with pediatric specialists. Facilities that serve counties with fewer than 50,000 residents would be eligible for the grant, which could be used for purchasing new telemedicine equipment or for upgrading existing IT equipment and infrastructure. The grant funds can also be used to cover the cost of contracting with the pediatric specialist.

**"We must focus on providing the best possible medical care to our children," added Guillen. "H.B. 1697 is a positive stride in that direction."**

H.B. 1697 took effect on September 1st.

*Serving ten rural South Texas counties in the Texas House of Representatives, Ryan Guillen is known for his hard work, fierce independence, and relentless efforts for South Texas families. Recently, Capitol Inside called him a "House Bill Machine," and a "one-person assembly line for legislation." Since elected, few other legislators have passed more bills than Guillen. Sign up for updates at [ryanguillen.com](http://ryanguillen.com), [facebook.com/representative.guillen](https://facebook.com/representative.guillen), and [twitter.com/ryanguillen](https://twitter.com/ryanguillen)*

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