

HB 1978 -- DISTRIBUTORS OF HYPODERMIC NEEDLES

SPONSOR: Stinnett

This bill requires the Department of Health and Senior Services to create a registration process for organizations interested in operating a syringe access program, or similar program intended to mitigate health risks associated with injectable drug use. The bill requires the Department, as a condition for registration, to ensure that any entity seeking registration has a collaborative agreement with an organization that provides access to mental health and/or substance use treatment options. No entity registered with the Department shall be present within 500 feet of any school building if the school building was established prior to the entity's operation.

In addition, this bill exempts any entity registered with the Department of Health and Senior Services, as well as any staff member, volunteer, or participant in a syringe access program that is operated by an entity registered with the Department, that possesses, distributes, delivers, or manufactures hypodermic needles or syringes for the operation of a syringe exchange program or to otherwise mitigate health risks associated with unsterilized injection drugs, from the laws controlling the unlawful distribution, delivery, sale, possession, and manufacturing of drug paraphernalia.

This bill is similar to HB 1245 (2023).