

By: Representative Turner

To: Insurance

## HOUSE BILL NO. 871

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 83-9-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE THAT FOR PURPOSES OF THE BALANCE BILLING PROHIBITION, A  
3 LICENSED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER RENDERING HOSPITAL, NURSING, MEDICAL  
4 OR SURGICAL SERVICES SHALL NOT INCLUDE THOSE IN THE PRACTICE OF  
5 DENTISTRY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 83-9-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
8 amended as follows:

9 83-9-5. (1) **Required provisions.** Except as provided in  
10 subsection (3) of this section, each such policy delivered or  
11 issued for delivery to any person in this state shall contain the  
12 provisions specified in this subsection in the words in which the  
13 same appear in this section. However, the insurer may, at its  
14 option, substitute for one or more of such provisions,  
15 corresponding provisions of different wording approved by the  
16 commissioner which are in each instance not less favorable in any  
17 respect to the insured or the beneficiary. Such provisions shall  
18 be preceded individually by the caption appearing in this  
19 subsection or, at the option of the insurer, by such appropriate



individual or group captions or subcaptions as the commissioner may approve.

As used in this section, the term "insurer" means a health maintenance organization, an insurance company or any other entity responsible for the payment of benefits under a policy or contract of accident and sickness insurance; however, the term "insurer" shall not mean a liquidator, rehabilitator, conservator or receiver or third-party administrator of any health maintenance organization, insurance company or other entity responsible for the payment of benefits which is in liquidation, rehabilitation or conservation proceedings, nor shall it mean any responsible guaranty association. Further, no cause of action shall accrue against a liquidator, rehabilitator, conservator or receiver or third-party administrator of any health maintenance organization, insurance company or other entity responsible for the payment of benefits which is in liquidation, rehabilitation or conservation proceedings or any responsible guaranty association under paragraph (h)3 of this subsection or any policy provision in accordance therewith.

(a) A provision as follows:

Entire contract; changes: This policy, including the endorsements and the attached papers, if any, constitutes the entire contract of insurance. No change in this policy shall be valid until approved by an executive officer of the insurer and unless such approval be endorsed hereon or attached hereto. No



agent has authority to change this policy or to waive any of its provisions.

(b) A provision as follows:

Time limit on certain defenses:

1. After two (2) years from the date of issue of this policy, no misstatements, except fraudulent misstatements, made by the applicant in the application for such policy shall be used to void the policy or to deny a claim for loss incurred or disability (as defined in the policy) commencing after the expiration of such two-year period.

(The foregoing policy provision shall not be so construed as to effect any legal requirement for avoidance of a policy or denial of a claim during such initial two-year period, nor to limit the application of subsection (2) (a) and (2) (b) of this section in the event of misstatement with respect to age or occupation.)

(A policy which the insured has the right to continue in force subject to its terms by the timely payment of premium (1) until at least age fifty (50) or, (2) in the case of a policy issued after age forty-four (44), for at least five (5) years from its date of issue, may contain in lieu of the foregoing the following provision (from which the clause in parentheses may be omitted at the insurer's option) under the caption "INCONTESTABLE":



69       After this policy has been in force for a period of two (2)  
70   years during the lifetime of the insured (excluding any period  
71   during which the insured is disabled), it shall become  
72   incontestable as to the statements in the application.)

73               2. No claim for loss incurred or disability (as  
74   defined in the policy) commencing after two (2) years from the  
75   date of issue of this policy shall be reduced or denied on the  
76   ground that a disease or physical condition not excluded from  
77   coverage by name or specific description effective on the date of  
78   loss had existed prior to the effective date of coverage of this  
79   policy.

80               (c) A provision as follows:

81       Grace period:

82       A grace period of seven (7) days for weekly premium policies,  
83   ten (10) days for monthly premium policies and thirty-one (31)  
84   days for all other policies will be granted for the payment of  
85   each premium falling due after the first premium, during which  
86   grace period the policy shall continue in force.

87       (A policy which contains a cancellation provision may add, at  
88   the end of the above provision, "subject to the right of the  
89   insurer to cancel in accordance with the cancellation provision  
90   hereof."

91       A policy in which the insurer reserves the right to refuse  
92   any renewal shall have, at the beginning of the above provision,  
93   "unless not less than five (5) days prior to the premium due date



94 the insurer has delivered to the insured or has mailed to his last  
95 address as shown by the records of the insurer written notice of  
96 its intention not to renew this policy beyond the period for which  
97 the premium has been accepted.")

98 (d) A provision as follows:

99 Reinstatement:

100 If any renewal premium be not paid within the time granted  
101 the insured for payment, a subsequent acceptance of premium by the  
102 insurer or by any agent duly authorized by the insurer to accept  
103 such premium, without requiring in connection therewith an  
104 application for reinstatement, shall reinstate the policy.

105 However, if the insurer or such agent requires an application for  
106 reinstatement and issues a conditional receipt for the premium  
107 tendered, the policy will be reinstated upon approval of such  
108 application by the insurer or, lacking such approval, upon the  
109 forty-fifth day following the date of such conditional receipt  
110 unless the insurer has previously notified the insured in writing  
111 of its disapproval of such application. The reinstated policy  
112 shall cover only loss resulting from such accidental injury as may  
113 be sustained after the date of reinstatement and loss due to such  
114 sickness as may begin more than ten (10) days after such date. In  
115 all other respects the insured and insurer shall have the same  
116 rights thereunder as they had under the policy immediately before  
117 the due date of the defaulted premium, subject to any provisions  
118 endorsed hereon or attached hereto in connection with the



reinstatement. Any premium accepted in connection with a reinstatement shall be applied to a period for which premium has not been previously paid, but not to any period more than sixty (60) days prior to the date of reinstatement. (The last sentence of the above provision may be omitted from any policy which the insured has the right to continue in force subject to its terms by the timely payment of premiums (1) until at least age fifty (50) or, (2) in the case of a policy issued after age forty-four (44), for at least five (5) years from its date of issue.)

(e) A provision as follows:

Notice of claim:

Written notice of claim must be given to the insurer within thirty (30) days after the occurrence or commencement of any loss covered by the policy, or as soon thereafter as is reasonably possible. Notice given by or on behalf of the insured or the beneficiary to the insurer at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert the location of such office as the insurer may designate for the purpose), or to any authorized agent of the insurer, with information sufficient to identify the insured, shall be deemed notice to the insurer.

(In a policy providing a loss of time benefit which may be payable for at least two (2) years, an insurer may, at its option, insert the following between the first and second sentences of the above provision: "Subject to the qualifications set forth below, if the insured suffers loss of time on account of disability for



144 which indemnity may be payable for at least two (2) years, he  
145 shall, at least once in every six (6) months after having given  
146 notice of claim, give to the insurer notice of continuance of said  
147 disability, except in the event of legal incapacity. The period  
148 of six (6) months following any filing of proof by the insured or  
149 any payment by the insurer on account of such claim or any denial  
150 of liability, in whole or in part, by the insurer shall be  
151 excluded in applying this provision. Delay in the giving of such  
152 notice shall not impair the insured's right to any indemnity which  
153 would otherwise have accrued during the period of six (6) months  
154 preceding the date on which such notice is actually given.")

155 (f) A provision as follows:

156 Claim forms:

157 The insurer, upon receipt of a notice of claim, will furnish  
158 to the claimant such forms as are usually furnished by it for  
159 filing proofs of loss. If such forms are not furnished within  
160 fifteen (15) days after the giving of such notice, the claimant  
161 shall be deemed to have complied with the requirements of this  
162 policy as to proof of loss upon submitting, within the time fixed  
163 in the policy for filing proofs of loss, written proof covering  
164 the occurrence, the character and the extent of the loss for which  
165 claim is made.

166 (g) A provision as follows:

167 Proofs of loss:



Written proof of loss must be furnished to the insurer at its said office, in case of claim for loss for which this policy provides any periodic payment contingent upon continuing loss, within ninety (90) days after the termination of the period for which the insurer is liable, and in case of claim for any other loss, within ninety (90) days after the date of such loss. Failure to furnish such proof within the time required shall not invalidate or reduce any claim if it was not reasonably possible to give proof within such time, provided such proof is furnished as soon as reasonably possible and in no event, except in the absence of legal capacity, later than one (1) year from the time proof is otherwise required.

(h) A provision as follows:

Time of payment of claims:

1. All benefits payable under this policy for any loss, other than loss for which this policy provides any periodic payment, will be paid within twenty-five (25) days after receipt of due written proof of such loss in the form of a clean claim where claims are submitted electronically, and will be paid within thirty-five (35) days after receipt of due written proof of such loss in the form of clean claim where claims are submitted in paper format. Benefits due under the policies and claims are overdue if not paid within twenty-five (25) days or thirty-five (35) days, whichever is applicable, after the insurer receives a clean claim containing necessary medical information and other





information essential for the insurer to administer preexisting condition, coordination of benefits and subrogation provisions. A "clean claim" means a claim received by an insurer for adjudication and which requires no further information, adjustment or alteration by the provider of the services or the insured in order to be processed and paid by the insurer. A claim is clean if it has no defect or impropriety, including any lack of substantiating documentation, or particular circumstance requiring special treatment that prevents timely payment from being made on the claim under this provision. A clean claim includes resubmitted claims with previously identified deficiencies corrected. Errors, such as system errors, attributable to the insurer, do not change the clean claim status.

A clean claim does not include any of the following:

- a. A duplicate claim, which means an original claim and its duplicate when the duplicate is filed within thirty (30) days of the original claim;
- b. Claims which are submitted fraudulently or that are based upon material misrepresentations;
- c. Claims that require information essential for the insurer to administer preexisting condition, coordination of benefits or subrogation provisions; or
- d. Claims submitted by a provider more than thirty (30) days after the date of service; if the provider does not submit the claim on behalf of the insured, then a claim is not



clean when submitted more than thirty (30) days after the date of  
billing by the provider to the insured.

Not later than twenty-five (25) days after the date the  
insurer actually receives an electronic claim, the insurer shall  
pay the appropriate benefit in full, or any portion of the claim  
that is clean, and notify the provider (where the claim is owed to  
the provider) or the insured (where the claim is owed to the  
insured) of the reasons why the claim or portion thereof is not  
clean and will not be paid and what substantiating documentation  
and information is required to adjudicate the claim as clean. Not  
later than thirty-five (35) days after the date the insurer  
actually receives a paper claim, the insurer shall pay the  
appropriate benefit in full, or any portion of the claim that is  
clean, and notify the provider (where the claim is owed to the  
provider) or the insured (where the claim is owed to the insured)  
of the reasons why the claim or portion thereof is not clean and  
will not be paid and what substantiating documentation and  
information is required to adjudicate the claim as clean. Any  
claim or portion thereof resubmitted with the supporting  
documentation and information requested by the insurer shall be  
paid within twenty (20) days after receipt.

For purposes of this provision, the term "pay" means that the  
insurer shall either send cash or a cash equivalent by United  
States mail, or send cash or a cash equivalent by other means such  
as electronic transfer, in full satisfaction of the appropriate



benefit due the provider (where the claim is owed to the provider) or the insured (where the claim is owed to the insured). To calculate the extent to which any benefits are overdue, payment shall be treated as made on the date a draft or other valid instrument was placed in the United States mail to the last known address of the provider (where the claim is owed to the provider) or the insured (where the claim is owed to the insured) in a properly addressed, postpaid envelope, or, if not so posted, or not sent by United States mail, on the date of delivery of payment to the provider or insured.

2. Subject to due written proof of loss, all accrued benefits for loss for which this policy provides periodic payment will be paid \_\_\_\_\_ (insert period for payment which must not be less frequently than monthly), and any balance remaining unpaid upon the termination of liability will be paid within thirty (30) days after receipt of due written proof.

3. If the claim is not denied for valid and proper reasons by the end of the applicable time period prescribed in this provision, the insurer must pay the provider (where the claim is owed to the provider) or the insured (where the claim is owed to the insured) interest on accrued benefits at the rate of three percent (3%) per month accruing from the day after payment was due on the amount of the benefits that remain unpaid until the claim is finally settled or adjudicated. Whenever interest due pursuant to this provision is less than One Dollar (\$1.00), such amount



shall be credited to the account of the person or entity to whom such amount is owed. The provisions of this subparagraph 3 shall not apply to any claims or benefits owed under Medicare Advantage plans or Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug plans.

4. In the event the insurer fails to pay benefits when due, the person entitled to such benefits may bring action to recover such benefits, any interest which may accrue as provided in subparagraph 3 of this paragraph (h) and any other damages as may be allowable by law. If it is determined in such action that the insurer acted in bad faith as evidenced by a repeated or deliberate pattern of failing to pay benefits and/or claims when due, the person entitled to such benefits (health care provider or insured) shall be entitled to recover damages in an amount up to three (3) times the amount of the benefits that remain unpaid until the claim is finally settled or adjudicated.

(i) A provision as follows:

Payment of claims:

Indemnity for loss of life will be payable in accordance with the beneficiary designation and the provisions respecting such payment which may be prescribed herein and effective at the time of payment. If no such designation or provision is then effective, such indemnity shall be payable to the estate of the insured. Any other accrued indemnities unpaid at the insured's death may, at the option of the insurer, be paid either to such beneficiary or to such estate. All other indemnities will be



293 payable to the insured. When payments of benefits are made to an  
294 insured directly for medical care or services rendered by a health  
295 care provider, the health care provider shall be notified of such  
296 payment. The notification requirement shall not apply to a  
297 fixed-indemnity policy, a limited benefit health insurance policy,  
298 medical payment coverage or personal injury protection coverage in  
299 a motor vehicle policy, coverage issued as a supplement to  
300 liability insurance or workers' compensation. If the insured  
301 provides the insurer with written direction that all or a portion  
302 of any indemnities or benefits provided by the policy be paid to a  
303 licensed health care provider rendering hospital, nursing, medical  
304 or surgical services, then the insurer shall pay directly the  
305 licensed health care provider rendering such services; provided,  
306 however, licensed health care provider shall not include those in  
307 the practice of dentistry. That payment shall be considered  
308 payment in full to the provider, who may not bill or collect from  
309 the insured any amount above that payment, other than the  
310 deductible, coinsurance, copayment or other charges for equipment  
311 or services requested by the insured that are noncovered benefits.  
312 Any dispute between a provider and the insured arising under these  
313 provisions regarding assignment of benefits and billing may be  
314 resolved by the Commissioner of Insurance. The Commissioner of  
315 Insurance shall adopt any rules and regulations necessary to  
316 enforce these provisions regarding assignment of benefits and  
317 billing.



318 (The following provision may be included with the foregoing  
319 provision at the option of the insurer: "If any indemnity of this  
320 policy shall be payable to the estate of the insured, or to an  
321 insured or beneficiary who is a minor or otherwise not competent  
322 to give a valid release, the insurer may pay such indemnity, up to  
323 an amount not exceeding \$\_\_\_\_\_ (insert an amount which  
324 must not exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00)), to any relative  
325 by blood or connection by marriage of the insured or beneficiary  
326 who is deemed by the insurer to be equitably entitled thereto.  
327 Any payment made by the insurer in good faith pursuant to this  
328 provision shall fully discharge the insurer to the extent of such  
329 payment.")

330 (j) A provision as follows:

331 Physical examinations:

332 The insurer at his own expense shall have the right and  
333 opportunity to examine the person of the insured when and as often  
334 as it may reasonably require during the pendency of a claim  
335 hereunder.

336 (k) A provision as follows:

337 Legal actions:

338 No action at law or in equity shall be brought to recover on  
339 this policy prior to the expiration of sixty (60) days after  
340 written proof of loss has been furnished in accordance with the  
341 requirements of this policy. No such action shall be brought



after the expiration of three (3) years after the time written  
proof of loss is required to be furnished.

(1) A provision as follows:

Change of beneficiary:

Unless the insured makes an irrevocable designation of  
beneficiary, the right to change the beneficiary is reserved to  
the insured, and the consent of the beneficiary or beneficiaries  
shall not be requisite to surrender or assignment of this policy,  
or to any change of beneficiary or beneficiaries, or to any other  
changes in this policy.

(The first clause of this provision, relating to the  
irrevocable designation of beneficiary, may be omitted at the  
insurer's option.)

(2) **Other provisions.** Except as provided in subsection (3)  
of this section, no such policy delivered or issued for delivery  
to any person in this state shall contain provisions respecting  
the matters set forth below unless such provisions are in the  
words in which the same appear in this section. However, the  
insurer may, at its option, use in lieu of any such provision a  
corresponding provision of different wording approved by the  
commissioner which is not less favorable in any respect to the  
insured or the beneficiary. Any such provision contained in the  
policy shall be preceded individually by the appropriate caption  
appearing in this subsection or, at the option of the insurer, by



such appropriate individual or group captions or subcaptions as the commissioner may approve.

(a) A provision as follows:

Change of occupation:

If the insured be injured or contract sickness after having changed his occupation to one classified by the insurer as more hazardous than that stated in this policy or while doing for compensation anything pertaining to an occupation so classified, the insurer will pay only such portion of the indemnities provided in this policy as the premium paid would have purchased at the rates and within the limits fixed by the insurer for such more hazardous occupation. If the insured changes his occupation to one classified by the insurer as less hazardous than that stated in this policy, the insurer, upon receipt of proof of such change of occupation, will reduce the premium rate accordingly, and will return the excess pro rata unearned premium from the date of change of occupation or from the policy anniversary date immediately preceding receipt of such proof, whichever is the most recent. In applying this provision, the classification of occupational risk and the premium rates shall be such as have been last filed by the insurer prior to the occurrence of the loss for which the insurer is liable, or prior to date of proof of change in occupation, with the state official having supervision of insurance in the state where the insured resided at the time this policy was issued; but if such filing was not required, then the





classification of occupational risk and the premium rates shall be those last made effective by the insurer in such state prior to the occurrence of the loss or prior to the date of proof of change in occupation.

(b) A provision as follows:

Misstatement of age:

If the age of the insured has been misstated, all amounts payable under this policy shall be such as the premium paid would have purchased at the correct age.

(c) A provision as follows:

Relation of earnings to issuance:

If the total monthly amount of loss of time benefits promised for the same loss under all valid loss of time coverage upon the insured, whether payable on a weekly or monthly basis, shall exceed the monthly earnings of the insured at the time disability commenced or his average monthly earnings for the period of two (2) years immediately preceding a disability for which claim is made, whichever is the greater, the insurer will be liable only for such proportionate amount of such benefits under this policy as the amount of such monthly earnings or such average monthly earnings of the insured bears to the total amount of monthly benefits for the same loss under all such coverage upon the insured at the time such disability commences and for the return of such part of the premiums paid during such two (2) years as shall exceed the pro rata amount of the premiums for the benefits



416 actually paid hereunder; but this shall not operate to reduce the  
417 total monthly amount of benefits payable under all such coverage  
418 upon the insured below the sum of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) or  
419 the sum of the monthly benefits specified in such coverages,  
420 whichever is the lesser, nor shall it operate to reduce benefits  
421 other than those payable for loss of time.

422 (The foregoing policy provision may be inserted only in a  
423 policy which the insured has the right to continue in force  
424 subject to its terms by the timely payment of premiums (1) until  
425 at least age fifty (50) or, (2) in the case of a policy issued  
426 after age forty-four (44), for at least five (5) years from its  
427 date of issue. The insurer may, at its option, include in this  
428 provision a definition of "valid loss of time coverage," approved  
429 as to form by the commissioner, which definition shall be limited  
430 in subject matter to coverage provided by governmental agencies or  
431 by organizations subject to regulations by insurance law or by  
432 insurance authorities of this or any other state of the United  
433 States or any province of Canada, or to any other coverage the  
434 inclusion of which may be approved by the commissioner, or any  
435 combination of such coverages. In the absence of such definition,  
436 such term shall not include any coverage provided for such insured  
437 pursuant to any compulsory benefit statute (including any workers'  
438 compensation or employer's liability statute), or benefits  
439 provided by union welfare plans or by employer or employee benefit  
440 organizations.)



441 (d) A provision as follows:

442 Unpaid premium:

443 Upon the payment of a claim under this policy, any premium  
444 then due and unpaid or covered by any note or written order may be  
445 deducted therefrom.

446 (e) A provision as follows:

447 Cancellation:

448 The insurer may cancel this policy at any time by written  
449 notice delivered to the insured, or mailed to his last address as  
450 shown by the records of the insurer, stating when, not less than  
451 five (5) days thereafter, such cancellation shall be effective;  
452 and after the policy has been continued beyond its original term,  
453 the insured may cancel this policy at any time by written notice  
454 delivered or mailed to the insurer, effective upon receipt or on  
455 such later date as may be specified in such notice. In the event  
456 of cancellation, the insurer will return promptly the unearned  
457 portion of any premium paid. If the insured cancels, the earned  
458 premium shall be computed by the use of the short-rate table last  
459 filed with the state official having supervision of insurance in  
460 the state where the insured resided when the policy was issued.  
461 If the insurer cancels, the earned premium shall be computed pro  
462 rata. Cancellation shall be without prejudice to any claim  
463 originating prior to the effective date of cancellation.

464 (f) A provision as follows:

465 Conformity with state statutes:



466 Any provision of this policy which, on its effective date, is  
467 in conflict with the statutes of the state in which the insured  
468 resides on such date is hereby amended to conform to the minimum  
469 requirements of such statutes.

470 (g) A provision as follows:

471 Illegal occupation:

472 The insurer shall not be liable for any loss to which a  
473 contributing cause was the insured's commission of or attempt to  
474 commit a felony or to which a contributing cause was the insured's  
475 being engaged in an illegal occupation.

476 (h) A provision as follows:

477 Intoxicants and narcotics:

478 The insurer shall not be liable for any loss sustained or  
479 contracted in consequence of the insured's being intoxicated or  
480 under the influence of any narcotic unless administered on the  
481 advice of a physician.

482 (3) **Inapplicable or inconsistent provisions.** If any  
483 provision of this section is, in whole or in part, inapplicable to  
484 or inconsistent with the coverage provided by a particular form of  
485 policy, the insurer, with the approval of the commissioner, shall  
486 omit from such policy any inapplicable provision or part of a  
487 provision, and shall modify any inconsistent provision or part of  
488 the provision in such manner as to make the provision as contained  
489 in the policy consistent with the coverage provided by the policy.



490           (4) **Order of certain policy provisions.** The provisions  
491 which are the subject of subsections (1) and (2) of this section,  
492 or any corresponding provisions which are used in lieu thereof in  
493 accordance with such subsections, shall be printed in the  
494 consecutive order of the provisions in such subsections or, at the  
495 option of the insurer, any such provision may appear as a unit in  
496 any part of the policy, with other provisions to which it may be  
497 logically related, provided the resulting policy shall not be, in  
498 whole or in part, unintelligible, uncertain, ambiguous, abstruse  
499 or likely to mislead a person to whom the policy is offered,  
500 delivered or issued.

501           (5) **Third-party ownership.** The word "insured," as used in  
502 Sections 83-9-1 through 83-9-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, shall  
503 not be construed as preventing a person other than the insured  
504 with a proper insurable interest from making application for and  
505 owning a policy covering the insured, or from being entitled under  
506 such a policy to any indemnities, benefits and rights provided  
507 therein.

508           (6) **Requirements of other jurisdictions.**

509           (a) Any policy of a foreign or alien insurer, when  
510 delivered or issued for delivery to any person in this state, may  
511 contain any provision which is not less favorable to the insured  
512 or the beneficiary than the provisions of Sections 83-9-1 through  
513 83-9-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, and which is prescribed or



required by the law of the state under which the insurer is organized.

(b) Any policy of a domestic insurer may, when issued for delivery in any other state or country, contain any provision permitted or required by the laws of such other state or country.

(7) **Filing procedure.** The commissioner may make such reasonable rules and regulations concerning the procedure for the filing or submission of policies subject to the cited sections as are necessary, proper or advisable to the administration of said sections. This provision shall not abridge any other authority granted the commissioner by law.

(8) **Administrative penalties.**

(a) If the commissioner finds that an insurer, during any calendar year, has paid at least eighty-five percent (85%), but less than ninety-five percent (95%), of all clean claims received from all providers during that year in accordance with the provisions of subsection (1)(h) of this section, the commissioner may levy an aggregate penalty in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00). If the commissioner finds that an insurer, during any calendar year, has paid at least fifty percent (50%), but less than eighty-five percent (85%), of all clean claims received from all providers during that year in accordance with the provisions of subsection (1)(h) of this section, the commissioner may levy an aggregate penalty in an amount of not less than Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) nor more



539 than One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00). If the  
540 commissioner finds that an insurer, during any calendar year, has  
541 paid less than fifty percent (50%) of all clean claims received  
542 from all providers during that year in accordance with the  
543 provisions of subsection (1)(h) of this section, the commissioner  
544 may levy an aggregate penalty in an amount not less than One  
545 Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) nor more than Two Hundred  
546 Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00). In determining the amount of any  
547 fine, the commissioner shall take into account whether the failure  
548 to achieve the standards in subsection (1)(h) of this section were  
549 due to circumstances beyond the control of the insurer. The  
550 insurer may request an administrative hearing to contest the  
551 assessment of any administrative penalty imposed by the  
552 commissioner pursuant to this subsection within thirty (30) days  
553 after receipt of the notice of assessment.

554 (b) Examinations to determine compliance with  
555 subsection (1)(h) of this section may be conducted by the  
556 commissioner or any of his examiners. The commissioner may  
557 contract with qualified impartial outside sources to assist in  
558 examinations to determine compliance. The expenses of any such  
559 examinations shall be paid by the insurer examined.

560 (c) Nothing in the provisions of subsection (1)(h) of  
561 this section shall require an insurer to pay claims that are not  
562 covered under the terms of a contract or policy of accident and  
563 sickness insurance.



564           (d) An insurer and a provider may enter into an express  
565 written agreement containing timely claim payment provisions which  
566 differ from, but are at least as stringent as, the provisions set  
567 forth under subsection (1)(h) of this section, and in such case,  
568 the provisions of the written agreement shall govern the timely  
569 payment of claims by the insurer to the provider. If the express  
570 written agreement is silent as to any interest penalty where  
571 claims are not paid in accordance with the agreement, the interest  
572 penalty provision of subsection (1)(h)3 of this section shall  
573 apply.

574           (e) The commissioner may adopt rules and regulations  
575 necessary to ensure compliance with this subsection.

576       **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
577 and after July 1, 2024.

