



## Arizona State Senate

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## Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



### Governor Signs Senator Lesko's 'Surprise Billing' Legislation

(Phoenix, State Capitol) ----- You probably know someone who's had it happen to them. They get a medical procedure that they believe insurance is covering, and weeks later they receive a bill saying they owe thousands of dollars, because one of the practitioners was out-of-network. Now, Arizonans will find it easier to dispute and resolve those surprise medical bills.

Governor Ducey has signed [SB 1441](#), a bill sponsored by Senator Debbie Lesko that creates a streamlined dispute-process so insured, in-network patients may challenge a surprise, out-of-network medical charge from their insurance or health provider.

SB 1441 provides Arizona patients with a layer of consumer protection. It starts by giving a patient and provider a venue to dispute a surprise medical bill through an informal settlement process on the phone. In the event the parties cannot come to an agreement, they may then move to an independent arbitration.

Senator Lesko worked extensively with a variety of people involved in medical billing, including multiple Arizona hospitals, insurance and health provider groups and doctor organizations, as well as Republican and Democratic lawmakers.

"Such billing practices have become a nationwide problem, placing both an emotional and financial burden on enrollees and their loved ones," said Senator Lesko. "Through no fault of their own, patients are often left uninformed and expected to pay for costs that they had not previously agreed to. This bill empowers Arizona health care consumers by providing them with a tool to deal with unexpected medical expenses through a fair, transparent resolution process, but in the least market-disruptive manner."

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