A Physician's Case for Choosing the Lone Star State


Texas was one of the five Best States to Practice. Dr. Carlos Cardenas talks to us about what makes it so friendly to physicians.

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In terms of a dynasty, the 1990s Dallas Cowboys have nothing on the state of Texas' placement in the Best States to Practice. For the fifth year in a row, the state was one of Physicians Practice's Best States to Practice. It placed seventh in malpractice premium average, fourth in residency retention, eighth in physician density, and eighth in cost of living.

What has made Texas such a consistent choice as a "Best State to Practice"? We spoke to Carlos Cardenas, a gastroenterologist from Edinburg, Texas, and president of the Texas Medical Association (TMA), to give us some insight into the Lone Star State's physician friendly attributes. He says the state has favorable Tort reform laws and lots of underserved areas, which mean there are opportunities to practice in different kinds of environments.

Another positive for physicians is Texas' pro-business attitude, Cardenas says. "There is no state income tax on personal income, which is a benefit. In addition, when you look at business taxes, levied on physicians in particular....physicians have an exclusion if their total [income] is $1.2 million or less, they don't have to pay any tax," he notes. The state also excludes Medicare, Medicaid, and charity work from tax-reported income, so this number is even lower.

Later in the podcast, Cardenas talks about how Texas could be a better place to practice medicine. "Like in a lot of states, we have a significant need in mental health and being able to provide to that population. We still are underserved in different areas of the state...in order to attend to a rapidly growing population. We still have a large uninsured population," he says.

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