

Turkey approves controversial health legislation

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Turkey's president has approved legislation that critics say could give authorities new powers to prosecute doctors for providing care deemed unauthorized.

Parliament passed the government-proposed health legislation earlier this month despite objections from [human rights groups](#) and the [medical community](#) who say it would bar doctors from caring for demonstrators hurt in protests.

President Abdullah Gul's office said he endorsed the legislation on Friday. It calls for fines and a maximum three years in prison for treatment of patients without Health Ministry authorization except for unexpected emergencies. It specifically forbids the establishment of clinics without government permit.

An Associated Press report last week revealed that authorities had assaulted doctors with tear gas, pressured them to reveal names of patients and ignored calls for more resources during the summer's anti-government protests.

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