

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2018 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Health Policy

HB 1009 — Closing the Gap Grant Program

by Rep. Brown and others (SB 1184 by Senator Gibson)

The bill expands the current list of nine priority health areas that are eligible for funding under the “Closing the Gap” grant program to include lupus.

Lupus is a chronic, autoimmune disease that triggers inflammation in bodily tissues. The body’s immune system attacks its own tissues and organs and the resulting inflammation can impact a person’s joints, skin, kidneys, blood cells, brain, heart, and lungs. Symptoms of lupus include fatigue, fever, stiff, swollen and painful joints, skin lesions, rash, chest pain, headaches, and memory loss. Certain ethnic groups have a greater chance of developing lupus than others. Lupus affects one in 537 young African American women and African American women are more likely to have organ involvement, develop lupus at a younger age, have more serious complications, and have a higher mortality rate due to lupus.

The “Closing the Gap” program provides state grants for activities designed to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in the designated priority areas. Grants are provided to community and neighborhood-based projects to improve the health outcomes of racial and ethnic populations within Florida counties. The program is administered by the Florida Department of Health.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2018.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 112-0