

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2014 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Health Policy

CS/HB 591 — Newborn Health Screening

by Health and Human Services Committee; and Rep. Harrell (CS/CS/CS/SB 722 by Judiciary Committee; Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee; Health Policy Committee; and Senators Garcia, Soto, Bean and Richter)

The bill expands the list of health care practitioners who may receive the results of a newborn's hearing and metabolic tests or screenings from the State Public Health Laboratory to include additional health care practitioners who may treat a child. This change is expected to expedite and simplify treatment since these practitioners will no longer be required to wait for the results to be transferred from the primary care physician. The bill revises the definition of "hearing impairment" to conform to national standards.

Additionally, if an audiologist diagnoses an infant or toddler with hearing loss, the bill requires that the audiologist or his or her designee ask the parent or guardian if he or she would like to receive information about services directly from Early Steps providers. This provision is expected to assist parents and guardians of newly-diagnosed children with hearing impairment in obtaining access to needed services.

The bill also makes two technical corrections, deleting an obsolete date and updating a cross-reference to federal law.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2014.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0