

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to health care; establishing
3 the Women and Heart Disease Task Force;
4 providing for membership; specifying
5 responsibilities; requiring a report; providing
6 for future repeal; providing an appropriation;
7 requiring certain education activities;
8 providing an effective date.

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10 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that heart disease is
11 the leading cause of death among American women and that women
12 fare worse after heart attacks than men, and

13 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that women are almost 50
14 percent more likely than men to die from their heart attacks
15 and, even when age and other medical differences are taken
16 into consideration, women are still 13 percent more likely
17 than men to die from their heart attacks, and

18 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that women who suffer a
19 first heart attack are at more than 70 percent greater risk of
20 death or readmission to a hospital than men and that more
21 women than men die from heart attacks within the first year
22 after their first heart attack and more women than men will
23 suffer a heart attack within 4 years after their first heart
24 attack, and

25 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the diagnosis of
26 heart disease can be harder in women and that women usually
27 have subtler symptoms of heart attack than men, which may
28 contribute to the fact that women typically receive medical
29 treatment for heart attacks later than men, and

30 WHEREAS, through the establishment of a state task
31 force on women and heart disease, the Legislature intends to

1 decrease the number of deaths due to heart disease by
2 increasing public awareness of heart disease in women, by
3 increasing, through public education, the percentage of women
4 who seek examinations by physicians and obtain preventive care
5 with regard to heart disease, and by increasing, through
6 private, state, and federal dollars, research and coordination
7 at Florida institutions that are studying the causes, methods
8 of prevention, and treatment of heart disease in women, NOW,
9 THEREFORE,

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11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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13 Section 1. Women and Heart Disease Task Force.--

14 (1) There is created within the Department of Health
15 the Women and Heart Disease Task Force, to identify where
16 public awareness, public education, research, and coordination
17 regarding women and heart disease are lacking, to prepare
18 recommendations to establish research on the reasons women
19 suffer more severe first heart attacks than men and the
20 reasons women die more often from heart attacks, and to
21 increase the public's awareness of the importance of
22 identifying the symptoms of, and treating, heart disease in
23 women.

24 (2) The task force is composed of the Secretary of
25 Health or a designee, the Insurance Commissioner or a
26 designee, the Secretary of Elder Affairs or a designee, and 23
27 members to be appointed by July 15, 1999, as follows:

28 (a) The Governor shall appoint one representative of
29 the University of Miami School of Medicine, one female family
30 physician from the Florida Academy of Family Physicians, one
31 female representative of the public who is a consumer advocate

1 and who has been diagnosed with heart disease, one
2 representative of the Florida Medical Association, one
3 representative of the Florida Chapter College of Cardiology,
4 one representative of the College of Emergency Physicians, one
5 representative of a business that has more than 300 employees,
6 one representative of a statutory teaching hospital, and one
7 representative of the Biotechnology Industry Organization.

8 (b) The President of the Senate shall appoint one
9 representative of the University of Florida College of
10 Medicine, one representative of the American Heart
11 Association, one female representative of the public who is a
12 consumer advocate and who has been diagnosed with heart
13 disease, one representative of the NOVA Southeastern
14 University of Osteopathic Medicine, one representative of the
15 Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, one representative of
16 the Florida Nurses Association, and one representative of a
17 health maintenance organization.

18 (c) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall
19 appoint one representative of the American Association of
20 Critical Care Nurses, one representative of the Mayo Clinic,
21 one representative of the University of South Florida College
22 of Medicine, one representative of the Florida Society of
23 Internal Medicine, one representative of the public who is a
24 consumer advocate, one representative of the Florida Affiliate
25 of the American Heart Association, and one representative of
26 the insurance industry.

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28 At least one of the persons appointed by each appointing
29 entity shall be a member of an ethnic or racial minority. At
30 least one-half of the members appointed by each appointing
31 entity shall be women.

1 (3) The task force shall exist for 2 years and shall
2 meet as often as necessary to carry out its duties and
3 responsibilities. Within existing resources, the Department
4 of Health shall provide support services to the task force.

5 (4) The members of the task force shall serve without
6 compensation.

7 (5) The task force may obtain information and
8 assistance from any state agency. All state agencies must
9 give the task force all relevant information and reasonable
10 assistance on matters related to heart disease.

11 (6) The task force shall collect research and
12 information on heart disease in women and shall prepare
13 recommendations for reducing the incidence and the number of
14 women's deaths related to heart disease in this state, to be
15 included in a report submitted to the Governor and the
16 Legislature by January 15, 2001. The task force shall also
17 review and report on:

18 (a) The Florida Insurance Code as it relates to
19 coverage for women's heart disease screening and treatment
20 options. The task force shall include in its report
21 recommended changes to the Florida Insurance Code, including
22 specific statutory language, if the task force determines such
23 changes are necessary to ensure that policyholders have
24 coverage for appropriate and necessary heart disease
25 prevention, screening, and treatment. If any legislative
26 changes are recommended that would mandate a health coverage
27 or the offering of a health coverage, the task force must
28 assess the impact of the proposal as specified in s. 624.215,
29 Florida Statutes.

1 (b) Approaches that may be used by state and local
2 governments to increase public awareness of the risks of heart
3 disease in women.

4 (c) Approaches to improving coordination among
5 agencies and institutions involved in research on and
6 treatment of heart disease in women.

7 (d) National trends with regard to women and heart
8 disease, as well as how these trends compare to trends in
9 Florida.

10 (7) The task force's recommendations shall include:

11 (a) A plan for reducing the number of deaths related
12 to heart disease in this state, including:

13 1. Specific strategies for reducing the mortality rate
14 of women with heart disease and an analysis of the extent to
15 which these strategies differ from such strategies for men.

16 2. A list of health conditions that may cause or
17 contribute to heart disease in women and the best methods to
18 identify, control, and prevent these conditions from
19 developing into heart disease.

20 3. The best methods to ensure an increase in the
21 percentage of women in this state who receive the tests
22 designed to determine the risk of heart disease and to
23 identify related conditions such as hypertension, diabetes,
24 and high blood levels of cholesterol.

25 4. The best methods to ensure an increase in the
26 percentage of women in this state who seek examinations from
27 physicians.

28 (b) A plan for increasing research and appropriate
29 funding at Florida institutions studying heart disease in
30 women.

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1 (c) A program to monitor the implementation and
2 effectiveness of the task force's recommendations.

3 (8) Through funding appropriated to the Department of
4 Health, the Women and Heart Disease Task Force shall develop
5 and implement an educational program, to include the
6 distribution of summaries, informing the public of the risk of
7 heart disease specific to women and the strategies to follow
8 for prevention, early detection, and treatment of heart
9 disease.

10 (9) This section is repealed effective July 1, 2001.

11 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General
12 Revenue Fund to the Department of Health the sum of \$150,000
13 and one position for fiscal year 1999-2000 for the
14 implementation of this act. Such funds shall be used to
15 produce or purchase and to distribute summaries in English,
16 Spanish, and Creole that inform women patients about their
17 risk of heart disease and about treatment alternatives for
18 heart disease, and to develop and implement an educational
19 program that includes the distribution of information specific
20 to women and heart disease.

21 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.
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