

By Senator Meek

36-1435-00

See HB

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to protection of children's

3 health; providing legislative findings and

4 intent; providing definitions; providing for

5 appointment of the Children's Health and

6 Environmental Protection Advisory Committee;

7 providing for organization and meetings and for

8 termination of the advisory committee;

9 providing for staff support by the Department

10 of Environmental Protection; providing for

11 reimbursement of members' per diem and travel

12 expenses; providing duties of the advisory

13 committee; requiring a report and

14 recommendations; providing an effective date.

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

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18 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent.--

19 (1) The Legislature finds that:

20 (a) Children today face an array of preventable

21 exposures to environmental hazards in their schools, homes,

22 and communities.

23 (b) Children are at greater risk than adults for

24 exposure to and possible illness from environmental hazards

25 due to their:

26 1. Decreased abilities to detoxify substances.

27 2. Greater sensitivity to environmental hazards during

28 the stages of development and growth as a result of their

29 immature body organs and tissues and weaker immune systems.

30 3. Different exposure and behavior patterns, such as

31 hand-to-mouth behavior, spending a greater amount of time

1 outdoors, and spending more time on the floor and on the
2 ground where contaminants can concentrate.

3 4. Ingestion of a greater amount of contaminants due
4 to eating proportionately more food, breathing proportionately
5 more air, and drinking proportionately more fluids than
6 adults.

7 (b) Children in poverty and children from racial and
8 ethnic communities may suffer more frequent and direct
9 exposure to many more chemicals and pollutants.

10 (c) Solutions to complex environmental health problems
11 require the ongoing communication and collaboration of
12 affected communities and many disciplines, including science,
13 medicine, public health, economics, planning, law, and policy.

14 (2) The Legislature recognizes its responsibilities:

15 (a) To enable all children to grow up in a safe and
16 healthy environment.

17 (b) To use its resources to ensure that every child is
18 provided with an environmentally safe and healthy learning
19 environment in which to grow, develop, and mature into a
20 productive and healthy adult.

21 (3) The Legislature intends to meet these
22 responsibilities by creating an advisory committee to identify
23 environmental hazards to children through interdisciplinary
24 problem solving and coalition building.

25 Section 2. Definitions.--As used in this act, unless
26 the context requires otherwise:

27 (1) "Advisory committee" means the Children's Health
28 and Environmental Protection Advisory Committee.

29 (2) "Environmental hazard" means exposure to harmful
30 chemicals and pollutants such as lead, pesticides, air
31 pollutants, contaminated drinking water, polluted waters,

1 toxic waste dumps, polychlorinated biphenyls, second-hand
2 tobacco smoke, industrial chemicals, and other chemicals and
3 pollutants that may impact children's health.

4 (3) "Protect the health of children" means to protect
5 the health of children by taking into account the special
6 vulnerabilities of children because of their developing
7 physiology and because their exposures, behaviors, and diet
8 can differ greatly from those of adults.

9 Section 3. Children's Health and Environmental
10 Protection Advisory Committee.--

11 (1) The Children's Health and Environmental Protection
12 Advisory Committee shall be composed of 13 members, as
13 follows:

14 (a) A member of the Senate appointed by the President
15 of the Senate.

16 (b) A member of the House of Representatives appointed
17 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

18 (c) The Secretary of Health, or the secretary's
19 designee.

20 (d) The Secretary of Environmental Protection, or the
21 secretary's designee.

22 (e) The Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer
23 Services, or the commissioner's designee.

24 (f) The Commissioner of Education, or the
25 commissioner's designee.

26 (g) The Secretary of Children and Family Services, or
27 the secretary's designee.

28 (h) The Secretary of Community Affairs, or the
29 secretary's designee.

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1 (i) Two licensed pediatric health care providers with
2 expertise in the field of children's environmental health,
3 appointed by the Governor.

4 (j) A licensed social worker with expertise in the
5 field of children's environmental health, appointed by the
6 Governor.

7 (k) A parent or guardian whose child has been exposed
8 to environmental health hazards, including lead paint or
9 pesticides, appointed by the Governor.

10 (l) A pediatric environmental health researcher,
11 appointed by the Governor.

12 (m) An economist skilled in measuring the economic
13 costs of illness and the benefits of prevention, appointed by
14 the Governor.

15 (2) The Secretary of Health, or that secretary's
16 designee, and the Secretary of Environmental Protection, or
17 that secretary's designee, shall serve as co-chairs of the
18 advisory committee.

19 (3)(a) The term of the advisory committee shall end
20 June 30, 2002.

21 (b) In the case of a vacancy of an appointed member,
22 the appointing authority shall appoint a successor to fill the
23 remainder of the term.

24 (4) The advisory committee shall meet at least six
25 times during its term, at such times and places as it
26 determines.

27 (5) A majority of the membership of the advisory
28 committee shall constitute a quorum.

29 (6) The Department of Environmental Protection shall
30 provide staff to the advisory committee.

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1 (7) Each member of the advisory committee is entitled
2 to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses as specified
3 in s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

4 (8) The advisory committee shall:

5 (a)1. Review existing state laws and rules to ensure
6 that the laws and rules adequately protect the health of
7 children from environmental hazards.

8 2. Recommend changes to any state laws and rules that
9 the advisory committee determines do not adequately protect
10 the health of children from environmental hazards.

11 (b) Gather and disseminate information to the public,
12 including the research and medical communities,
13 community-based organizations, schools, and state agencies, on
14 how to reduce, treat, and eliminate children's exposures to
15 environmental hazards, to further the public's understanding
16 of the environmental hazards that may potentially affect
17 children.

18 (c) Develop uniform guidelines for state agencies to
19 follow to assist in reducing and eliminating the exposure of
20 children to environmental hazards, especially in areas
21 reasonably accessible to children.

22 (d) Produce a report of its recommendations to the
23 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
24 House of Representatives by February 15, 2002.

25 Section 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
26 law.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Provides for appointment of the Children's Health and Environmental Protection Advisory Committee, under the Department of Environmental Protection. Provides duty of the advisory committee to review and recommend changes to existing state laws and rules to ensure adequate protection of the health of children from environmental hazards, disseminate information regarding the exposure of children to environmental hazards, and develop uniform guidelines for state agencies to follow to assist in the reduction and elimination of such exposures. Requires the advisory committee to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature by February 15, 2002. Provides for termination of the advisory committee on June 30, 2002.