

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 providing an effective date.

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

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

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

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

29 WHEREAS, through the establishment of a state task
30 force on women and heart disease, the Legislature intends to
31 decrease the number of deaths due to heart disease by

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

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

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

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

23 (2) The task force is composed of the Secretary of
24 Health or a designee, the Executive Director of the Agency for
25 Health Care Administration or a designee, the Insurance
26 Commissioner or a designee, and 28 members to be appointed by
27 July 15, 2000, as follows:

28 (a) The Governor shall appoint one representative from
29 the Florida State Medical Association, one representative from
30 the Black Nurses Association, one representative from the
31 Association for Black Women Physicians, one representative of

1 the University of Miami School of Medicine, one female family
2 physician from the Florida Academy of Family Physicians, one
3 female representative of the public who is a consumer advocate
4 and who has been diagnosed with heart disease, one
5 representative of the Florida Medical Association, one
6 representative of the Florida Chapter College of Cardiology,
7 one representative of the College of Emergency Physicians, one
8 representative of a business that has more than 300 employees,
9 one representative of a family practice teaching hospital, and
10 one representative of a statutory teaching hospital.

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

22 (c) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall
23 appoint one representative of the American Association of
24 Critical Care Nurses, one representative of the Mayo Clinic,
25 one representative of the University of South Florida College
26 of Medicine, one representative of the Florida Society of
27 Internal Medicine, one representative of the public who is a
28 consumer advocate, one representative of the Florida Affiliate
29 of the American Heart Association, one representative of the
30 Biotechnology Industry Organization, and one representative of
31 the insurance industry.

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2 At least one of the persons appointed by each appointing
3 entity shall be a member of an ethnic or racial minority. At
4 least one-half of the members appointed by each appointing
5 entity shall be women.

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

10 (4) The members of the task force shall serve without
11 compensation but shall be reimbursed for per diem and travel
12 expenses by the Department of Health in accordance with the
13 provisions of section 112.061, Florida Statutes, while
14 performing their duties.

15 (5) The task force may obtain information and
16 assistance from any state agency. All state agencies must
17 give the task force all relevant information and reasonable
18 assistance on matters related to heart disease.

19 (6) The task force shall collect research and
20 information on heart disease in women and shall prepare
21 recommendations and proposed legislation for reducing the
22 incidence and the number of women's deaths related to heart
23 disease in this state, to be included in a report submitted to
24 the Governor and the Legislature by January 15, 2002. The
25 task force shall also review and report on:

26 (a) The Florida Insurance Code as it relates to
27 coverage for women's heart disease screening and treatment
28 options. The task force shall include in its report
29 recommended changes to the Florida Insurance Code, including
30 specific statutory language, if the task force determines such
31 changes are necessary to ensure that policyholders have

1 coverage for appropriate and necessary heart disease
2 prevention, screening, and treatment. If any legislative
3 changes are recommended that would mandate a health coverage
4 or the offering of a health coverage, the task force must
5 assess the impact of the proposal as specified in s. 624.215,
6 Florida Statutes.

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

10 (c) Approaches to improving coordination among
11 agencies and institutions involved in research on and
12 treatment of heart disease in women.

13 (d) National trends with regard to women and heart
14 disease, as well as how these trends compare to trends in
15 Florida.

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

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

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

22 2. A list of health conditions that may cause or
23 contribute to heart disease in women and the best methods by
24 which to identify, control, and prevent these conditions from
25 developing into heart disease.

26 3. The best methods for ensuring an increase in the
27 percentage of women in this state who receive the tests
28 designed to determine the risk of heart disease and to
29 identify related conditions such as hypertension, diabetes,
30 and high blood levels of cholesterol.

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1 4. The best methods for ensuring an increase in the
2 percentage of women in this state who seek examinations from
3 physicians.

4 (b) A plan for increasing research and appropriate
5 funding at Florida institutions studying heart disease in
6 women.

7 (c) Recommendations for the development of practice
8 guidelines for addressing heart disease in women.

9 (d) A program to monitor the implementation and
10 effectiveness of the task force's recommendations.

11 (8) Through funding appropriated to the Department of
12 Health, the Women and Heart Disease Task Force shall develop
13 and implement an educational program, to include the
14 distribution of summaries, informing the public of the risk of
15 heart disease specific to women and the strategies to follow
16 for prevention, early detection, and treatment of heart
17 disease.

18 (9) This section is repealed effective July 1, 2002.

19 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General
20 Revenue Fund to the Department of Health the sum of \$100,000
21 for fiscal year 2000-2001 and \$100,000 for fiscal year
22 2001-2002, to be used to produce or purchase and to distribute
23 summaries in English, Spanish, and Creole which inform women
24 patients about their risk of heart disease and about treatment
25 alternatives for heart disease, and to develop and implement
26 an educational program that includes the distribution of
27 information specific to women and heart disease.

28 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.
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