

By Representative Bilirakis

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to community health centers;
 3 creating the "Community Health Center Access
 4 Program Act"; providing legislative findings
 5 and intent; providing for expansion of
 6 federally qualified health centers to provide
 7 comprehensive primary and preventive health
 8 care services; providing for financial
 9 assistance to centers that meet specified
 10 criteria; specifying that funds must be used
 11 for certain operating costs or capital
 12 improvement projects; providing for appointment
 13 of a panel to review applications for financial
 14 assistance; providing responsibilities of the
 15 Department of Health and the Florida
 16 Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.;
 17 providing for administration of the program and
 18 technical assistance to centers selected to
 19 receive financial assistance; providing an
 20 effective date.

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

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 24 Section 1. Community health center access program.--

25 (1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the
 26 "Community Health Center Access Program Act."

27 (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

28 (a) The Legislature finds that, despite significant
 29 investments in health care programs, more than 2 million
 30 low-income Floridians, primarily the working poor and minority
 31 populations, continue to lack access to basic health care

1 services. Further, the Legislature recognizes that federally
2 qualified health centers have a proven record of providing
3 cost-effective, comprehensive primary and preventive health
4 care and are uniquely qualified to address the lack of
5 adequate health care services for the uninsured.

6 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to recognize
7 the significance of increased federal investments in community
8 health centers and to leverage that investment through the
9 creation of a program to provide for the expansion of the
10 primary and preventive health care services offered by
11 federally qualified health centers. Further, such a program
12 will support the coordination of federal, state, and local
13 resources to assist such health centers in developing an
14 expanded community-based primary care delivery system.

15 (3) ASSISTANCE TO FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH
16 CENTERS.--The Department of Health shall develop a program for
17 the expansion of federally qualified health centers for the
18 purpose of providing comprehensive primary and preventive
19 health care services, including services that may reduce the
20 morbidity, mortality, and cost of care among the uninsured
21 population of the state. The program shall provide for
22 distribution of financial assistance to federally qualified
23 health centers that apply and demonstrate a need for such
24 assistance in order to sustain or expand the delivery of
25 primary and preventive health care services. In selecting
26 centers to receive this financial assistance, the program:

27 (a) Shall give preference to communities that have few
28 or no community-based primary care services or in which the
29 current services are unable to meet the community's needs.
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1 (b) Shall require that primary care services be
2 provided to the medically indigent using a sliding fee
3 schedule based on income.

4 (c) Shall allow innovative and creative uses of
5 federal, state, and local health care resources.

6 (d) Shall require that the funds provided be used to
7 pay for operating costs of a projected expansion in patient
8 caseloads or services or for capital improvement projects.

9 Capital improvement projects may include renovations to
10 existing facilities or construction of new facilities,
11 provided that an expansion in patient caseloads or services to
12 a new patient population will occur as a result of the capital
13 expenditures.

14 (e) May require in-kind support from other sources.

15 (f) May encourage coordination among federally
16 qualified health centers, other private-sector providers, and
17 publicly supported programs.

18 (4) EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.--A review panel shall
19 be established, consisting of four persons appointed by the
20 Secretary of Health and three persons appointed by the chief
21 executive officer of the Florida Association of Community
22 Health Centers, Inc., to review all applications for financial
23 assistance under the program. Applicants shall specify in the
24 application whether the program funds will be used for the
25 expansion of patient caseloads or services or for capital
26 improvement projects to expand and improve patient facilities.
27 The panel shall use the following elements in reviewing
28 application proposals and shall determine the relative weight
29 for scoring and evaluating these elements:

30 (a) The target population to be served.

31 (b) The health benefits to be provided.

- 1 (c) The methods that will be used to measure
2 cost-effectiveness.
- 3 (d) How patient satisfaction will be measured.
- 4 (e) The proposed internal quality assurance process.
- 5 (f) Projected health status outcomes.
- 6 (g) How data will be collected to measure
7 cost-effectiveness, health status outcomes, and overall
8 achievement of the goals of the proposal.
- 9 (h) All resources, including cash, in-kind, voluntary,
10 or other resources that will be dedicated to the proposal.
- 11 (5) ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.--The
12 Department of Health may contract with the Florida Association
13 of Community Health Centers, Inc., to administer the program
14 and provide technical assistance to the federally qualified
15 health centers selected to receive financial assistance.

16 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.

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19 HOUSE SUMMARY

20
21 Creates the "Community Health Center Access Program Act."
22 Provides legislative findings and intent. Provides for
23 establishment of a program under the Department of Health
24 to provide financial assistance to federally qualified
25 health centers to expand their ability to provide
26 comprehensive primary and preventive health care services
27 to low-income persons. Specifies criteria that such
28 centers must meet to receive such financial assistance
29 and specifies that funds received must be used for
30 certain operating costs or capital improvement projects.
31 Provides for establishment of a panel, appointed by the
 Secretary of Health and the chief executive officer of
 the Florida Association of Community Health Centers,
 Inc., to review the applications for financial
 assistance. Authorizes the department to contract with
 the association to administer the program and provide
 technical assistance to centers selected to receive
 financial assistance.