

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Women's Health Strategy; amending s. 20.43, F.S.; establishing the Officer of Women's Health Strategy in the Department of Health; creating s. 381.04015, F.S.; providing legislative intent; providing the duties of the Officer of Women's Health Strategy; requiring an annual report to the Governor and Legislature with policy recommendations for implementing the Women's Health Strategy; requiring consideration of women's health issues and gender in state policy, planning, and budgeting; providing for responsibility and coordination; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsection (2) of section 20.43, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

20.43 Department of Health.--There is created a Department of Health.

(2)(a) The head of the Department of Health is the Secretary of Health and State Health Officer. The secretary must be a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 who has advanced training or extensive experience in public health administration. The secretary is appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Senate. The secretary serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

(b) The Officer of Women's Health Strategy is established within the Department of Health and shall report directly to the secretary.

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30 Section 2. Section 381.04015, Florida Statutes, is created  
31 to read:

32 381.04015 Women's Health Strategy; legislative intent;  
33 duties of Officer of Women's Health Strategy; other state agency  
34 duties.--

35 (1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--The Legislature recognizes that  
36 the health care needs of women are gender specific and that  
37 public policy must take into account the distinct  
38 characteristics of women's health issues. Priority shall be  
39 given to improve the overall health status of women through  
40 research and education on women's health issues. The Legislature  
41 recognizes the importance of understanding why there are such  
42 large differences between how women and men experience certain  
43 diseases and also recognizes that biomedical research is the key  
44 to finding these answers. Such research has important  
45 implications for both women and men in terms of clinical  
46 practice and disease prevention and manifestation. The  
47 Legislature recognizes that as the state's population continues  
48 to age and life expectancy for women continues to rise, it is of  
49 the utmost importance for the Legislature to encourage effective  
50 medical research on long-term health issues for women and to  
51 educate elder women about the importance of participating in  
52 medical studies. The Legislature finds and declares that the  
53 design and delivery of health care services and the medical  
54 education of health care practitioners shall be directed by the  
55 principle that health care needs are gender specific.

56 (2) DUTIES.--The Officer of Women's Health Strategy in the  
57 Department of Health shall:

58 (a) Ensure that the state's policies and programs are

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59 responsive to sex and gender differences and to women's health  
60 needs across the life span.

61 (b) Organize an interagency Committee for Women's Health  
62 for the purpose of integrating women's health programs in  
63 current operating and service delivery structures and setting  
64 priorities for women's health. Such committee shall be comprised  
65 of the heads or directors of state agencies with programs  
66 affecting women's health, including, but not limited to, the  
67 Department of Health, the Agency for Health Care Administration,  
68 the Department of Education, the Department of Elderly Affairs,  
69 the Department of Corrections, the Office of Insurance  
70 Regulation of the Department of Financial Services, and the  
71 Department of Juvenile Justice.

72 (c) Assess the health status of women in the state through  
73 the collection and review of health data and trends.

74 (d) Review the state's insurance code as it relates to  
75 women's health issues.

76 (e) Work with medical school curriculum committees to  
77 develop course requirements on women's health and promote  
78 clinical practice guidelines specific to women.

79 (f) Organize statewide Women's Health Month activities.

80 (g) Coordinate a Governor's statewide conference on  
81 women's health, cosponsored by the agencies participating in the  
82 Committee for Women's Health and other private organizations and  
83 entities impacting women's health in the state.

84 (h) Promote research, treatment, and collaboration on  
85 women's health issues at universities and medical centers in the  
86 state.

87 (i) Promote employer incentives for wellness programs

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88 targeting women's health programs.

89 (j) Serve as the primary state resource for women's health  
90 information.

91 (k) Develop a statewide women's health plan emphasizing  
92 collaborative approaches to meeting the health needs of women.

93 The plan shall:

94 1. Identify activities designed to reduce the number of  
95 premature deaths in women, including:

96 a. Providing specific strategies for reducing the  
97 mortality rate of women.

98 b. Listing conditions that may cause or contribute to  
99 disease in women and the best methods by which to identify,  
100 control, and prevent these conditions from developing.

101 c. Identifying the best methods for ensuring an increase  
102 in the percentage of women in the state who receive diagnostic  
103 and screening testing.

104 2. Provide for increasing research and appropriate funding  
105 at institutions in the state studying disease in women.

106 3. Provide recommendations for the development of practice  
107 guidelines for addressing disease in women.

108 4. Provide recommendations for reducing health disparities  
109 among women in all races and ethnic groups.

110 5. Coordinate with existing program plans that address  
111 women's health issues.

112 (l) Promote clinical practice guidelines specific to  
113 women.

114 (m) Serve as the state's liaison with other states and  
115 federal agencies and programs to develop best practices in  
116 women's health.

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117 (n) Develop a statewide, web-based clearinghouse on  
118 women's health issues and resources.

119 (o) Promote public awareness campaigns and education on  
120 the health needs of women.

121 (p) By January 15 of each year, provide the Governor, the  
122 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
123 Representatives a report with policy recommendations for  
124 implementing the provisions of this section.

125 (3) DUTIES OF OTHER STATE AGENCIES.--

126 (a) Women's health issues shall be taken into  
127 consideration in the annual budget planning of the Department of  
128 Health, the Agency for Health Care Administration, and the  
129 Department of Elderly Affairs.

130 (b) The inclusion of gender considerations and  
131 differential impact shall be one of the criteria when assessing  
132 research and demonstration proposals for which state funding is  
133 being sought from the Department of Health, the Agency for  
134 Health Care Administration, and the Department of Elderly  
135 Affairs.

136 (c) Boards or advisory bodies that fall under the purview  
137 of the Department of Health, the Agency for Health Care  
138 Administration, and the Department of Elderly Affairs shall be  
139 encouraged to seek equal representation of women and men and the  
140 inclusion of persons who are knowledgeable and sensitive to  
141 gender and diversity issues.

142 (4) RESPONSIBILITY AND COORDINATION.--The officer and the  
143 department shall direct and carry out the Women's Health  
144 Strategy established under this section in accordance with the  
145 requirements of this section and may work with the Executive

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146 Office of the Governor and other state agencies to carry out  
147 their duties and responsibilities under this section.

148 Section 3. Effective July 1, 2004, there is appropriated  
149 the sum of \$150,000 from the General Revenue Fund, and one full-  
150 time equivalent position is authorized, for the Department of  
151 Health to implement the establishment of the Officer of Women's  
152 Health Strategy by this act.

153 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.