

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to arthritis prevention and  
3           education; creating s. 385.210, F.S.; providing  
4           a short title; providing legislative findings;  
5           providing purposes; directing the Department of  
6           Health to establish an arthritis prevention and  
7           education program; requiring the department to  
8           conduct a needs assessment; providing for  
9           establishment of a statewide partnership on  
10          arthritis; providing for implementation of a  
11          public awareness effort; providing for funding  
12          through contributions; directing the Secretary  
13          of Health to seek federal waivers as necessary  
14          to maximize federal funding; providing an  
15          effective date.

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

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19           Section 1. Section 385.210, Florida Statutes, is  
20          created to read:

21                   385.210 Arthritis prevention and education.--

22                   (1) SHORT TITLE.--This act may be cited as the  
23 "Arthritis Prevention and Education Act."

24                   (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.--The Legislature finds the  
25 following:

26                   (a) Arthritis encompasses more than 100 diseases and  
27 conditions that affect joints, the surrounding tissues, and  
28 other connective tissues.

29                   (b) Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in  
30 the United States, limiting daily activities for more than 7  
31 million citizens.

1       (c) This disease has a significant impact on quality  
2 of life, not only for the individual who experiences its  
3 painful symptoms and resulting disability, but also for family  
4 members and caregivers.

5       (d) There are enormous economic and social costs  
6 associated with treating arthritis and its complications; the  
7 economic costs are estimated at over \$116 billion (1997)  
8 annually in the United States.

9       (e) Currently, the challenge exists to ensure delivery  
10 of effective, but often underutilized, interventions that are  
11 necessary in the prevention or reduction of arthritis-related  
12 pain and disability.

13       (f) Although there exists a large quantity of public  
14 information about arthritis, including programs that can  
15 dramatically affect early diagnosis and treatment as well as  
16 the quality of life of people with arthritis, such information  
17 remains inadequately disseminated and insufficient in  
18 addressing the needs of specific diverse populations and other  
19 underserved groups.

20       (g) The National Arthritis Foundation, the Centers for  
21 Disease Control and Prevention, and the Association of State  
22 and Territorial Health Officials have led the development of a  
23 public health strategy, the National Arthritis Action Plan, to  
24 respond to this challenge.

25       (h) Educating the public and the health care community  
26 throughout the state about this devastating disease is of  
27 paramount importance and is in every respect in the public  
28 interest and to the benefit of all residents of the state.

29       (3) PURPOSES.--The purposes of this section are to:

30       (a) Create and foster a statewide program that  
31 promotes public awareness and increases knowledge concerning

1 the causes of arthritis, the importance of early diagnosis and  
2 appropriate management, effective prevention strategies, and  
3 pain prevention and management.

4 (b) Develop knowledge and enhance understanding of  
5 arthritis by disseminating educational materials and  
6 information on research results, services provided, and  
7 strategies for prevention and education to patients, health  
8 professionals, and the public.

9 (c) Establish a solid scientific base of knowledge  
10 concerning the prevention of arthritis and related  
11 disabilities through surveillance, epidemiology, and  
12 prevention research.

13 (d) Use educational and training resources and  
14 services developed by organizations with appropriate expertise  
15 and knowledge of arthritis and to use available technical  
16 assistance.

17 (e) Evaluate the need for improving the quality and  
18 accessibility of existing community-based arthritis services.

19 (f) Heighten awareness among state and local health  
20 and human services officials, health professionals and  
21 providers, and policymakers about the prevention, detection,  
22 and treatment of arthritis.

23 (g) Implement and coordinate state and local programs  
24 and services to reduce the public health burden of arthritis.

25 (h) Provide lasting improvements in the delivery of  
26 health care for individuals with arthritis and their families,  
27 thus improving their quality of life while also containing  
28 health care costs.

29 (4) ARTHRITIS PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM.--

30 (a) Program establishment.--To the extent that funds  
31 are specifically made available for this purpose, the

1 Department of Health shall establish, promote, and maintain an  
2 arthritis prevention and education program to raise public  
3 awareness, educate consumers, and educate and train health  
4 professionals, teachers, and human services providers, and for  
5 other purposes as provided in this section.

6 (b) Needs assessment.--The department shall conduct a  
7 needs assessment to identify:

8 1. Epidemiological and other research on arthritis  
9 being conducted within the state.

10 2. Available technical assistance and educational  
11 materials and programs on arthritis nationwide and within the  
12 state.

13 3. The level of public and professional awareness of  
14 arthritis.

15 4. The needs of people with arthritis, their families,  
16 and caregivers.

17 5. The educational and support service needs of health  
18 care providers, including physicians, nurses, managed care  
19 organizations, and other health care providers, relating to  
20 arthritis.

21 6. The services available to persons with arthritis.

22 7. The existence of arthritis treatment,  
23 self-management, physical activity, and other education  
24 programs.

25 8. The existence of rehabilitation services for people  
26 with arthritis.

27 (c) Statewide partnership on arthritis.--The  
28 department shall establish and coordinate a statewide  
29 partnership on arthritis to collaborate on and address  
30 arthritis issues within the state. Membership shall include,  
31 but is not limited to, persons with arthritis, public health

1 educators, medical experts on arthritis, providers of  
2 arthritis health care, persons knowledgeable in health  
3 promotion and education, and representatives of national  
4 arthritis organizations and their local chapters.

5 (d) Public awareness.--The department shall use, but  
6 is not limited to, strategies consistent with the National  
7 Arthritis Action Plan and existing state planning efforts to  
8 raise public awareness and knowledge on the causes and nature  
9 of arthritis, personal risk factors, the value of prevention  
10 and early detection, ways to minimize preventable pain through  
11 evidence-based self-management interventions, and options for  
12 diagnosing and treating the disease.

13 (5) FUNDING.--

14 (a) The Secretary of Health may accept grants,  
15 services, and property from the Federal Government,  
16 foundations, organizations, medical schools, and other  
17 entities as may be available for the purposes of fulfilling  
18 the obligations of this program.

19 (b) The secretary shall seek any federal waiver or  
20 waivers that may be necessary to maximize funds from the  
21 Federal Government to implement this program.

22 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
23 law.