

By Senator Aronberg

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1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to maternal and child health; creating  
3 s. 383.2163, F.S., the "Florida Nurse Home Visitation  
4 Act"; providing a short title; establishing a nurse  
5 home visitation pilot program in specified areas;  
6 providing purpose; providing definitions; requiring  
7 local Healthy Start coalitions to administer the  
8 program; providing duties of the Department of Health;  
9 providing for administration of the program; providing  
10 eligibility requirements; requiring the department to  
11 adopt rules; requiring the department to submit an  
12 annual report to the Governor and Legislature;  
13 providing an effective date.

14  
15 WHEREAS, in order to adequately care for their newborns and  
16 young children, new mothers may often seek and benefit from  
17 receiving professional assistance and information, and, without  
18 such assistance and information, a young mother may develop  
19 habits or practices that are detrimental to her health and well-  
20 being and the health and well-being of her child, and

21 WHEREAS, inadequate prenatal care and inadequate care in  
22 infancy and early childhood often inhibit a child's ability to  
23 learn and develop throughout his or her childhood and may have  
24 lasting, adverse effects on the child's ability to function as  
25 an adult, and

26 WHEREAS, implementation of a nurse home visitation program  
27 that provides educational, health, and other resources for new  
28 mothers during pregnancy and the first years of their infants'  
29 lives has been proven to significantly reduce the number of

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30 premature births, the incidence of drug, tobacco, and alcohol  
31 use and abuse by mothers, the occurrence of criminal activity  
32 engaged in by mothers and their children under 15 years of age,  
33 and the number of reported incidents of child abuse and neglect,  
34 and

35 WHEREAS, one example of this type of program, the Nurse-  
36 Family Partnership, has succeeded in reducing the number of a  
37 mother's subsequent births, increasing the length of time  
38 between subsequent births, reducing the mother's need for other  
39 forms of public assistance, and promoting the overall health and  
40 developmental outcomes for the mother and her young children,  
41 and

42 WHEREAS, the Nurse-Family Partnership model has been shown  
43 to be cost effective, yielding a 5-to-1 return on investment for  
44 every dollar spent on evidence-based nurse home visitation  
45 services and producing a net benefit of \$34,000 per high-risk  
46 family served, NOW, THEREFORE,

47  
48 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

49  
50 Section 1. Section 383.2163, Florida Statutes, is created  
51 to read:

52 383.2163 Nurse home visitation pilot program.-

53 (1) This section may be cited as the "Florida Nurse Home  
54 Visitation Act."

55 (2) A nurse home visitation pilot program is established in  
56 Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties and shall be  
57 administered in at least two communities located in each county.  
58 The purpose of the pilot program is to provide regular, in-home,

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59 visiting nurse services to low-income, first-time mothers.  
60 Visiting nurses shall educate mothers about the importance of  
61 nutrition, the benefits of avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and drugs,  
62 and the best ways to provide care for their children. In  
63 addition, visiting nurses may provide assistance to enable  
64 mothers to continue their education or find employment. Any  
65 assistance provided through the program shall be provided only  
66 with the consent of the low-income, first-time mother. Services  
67 shall begin during the mother's pregnancy and continue until her  
68 child's second birthday; however, the mother may refuse to  
69 continue receiving services at any time.

70 (3) As used in this section, the term:

71 (a) "Department" means the Department of Health.

72 (b) "Local entity" means the local Healthy Start coalition.

73 (c) "Low-income" means having an annual household income  
74 that does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

75 (d) "Nurse" means a registered nurse, licensed practical  
76 nurse, clinical nurse specialist, or advanced registered nurse  
77 practitioner as defined in s. 464.003.

78 (e) "Pilot program" or "program" means the nurse home  
79 visitation pilot program established under this section.

80 (4) The program shall be administered by the local entity  
81 and provide services to a minimum of 100 low-income, first-time  
82 mothers in that community. The department may waive this  
83 requirement if the population base of the community does not  
84 include 100 eligible mothers. The department shall ensure the  
85 ability of the local entity to implement the program within the  
86 smaller community and maintain compliance with program  
87 requirements. A mother is eligible to receive services through

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88 the program if she is pregnant with her first child and her  
89 gross annual household income does not exceed 200 percent of the  
90 federal poverty level.

91 (5) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to ss.  
92 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this section. Rules that  
93 establish program training requirements, protocols, management  
94 information systems, and evaluation requirements shall be  
95 modeled after practices and procedures of research-based  
96 programs that have been implemented in one or more other states  
97 for at least 5 years. In order to produce sizeable, sustained  
98 outcomes for families who receive services through the pilot  
99 program, the department shall ensure that services are provided  
100 in accordance with outcome standards that have been replicated  
101 in randomized controlled trials conducted at multiple sites and  
102 that have shown significant reductions in:

103 (a) The number of babies born prematurely or with low birth  
104 weight.

105 (b) The occurrence of infant behavioral impairments due to  
106 a mother's use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

107 (c) The number of reported incidents of child abuse and  
108 neglect.

109 (d) The number of subsequent pregnancies.

110 (e) The number of mothers receiving public assistance.

111 (f) Criminal activity engaged in by a mother or her child  
112 or children.

113 (6) The department shall monitor the administration of the  
114 program to ensure that the program is implemented according to  
115 the program training requirements, protocols, management  
116 information systems, and evaluation requirements established by

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117 rule of the department. The department shall evaluate the  
118 program and submit an annual report of its findings and  
119 recommendations on or before January 1 of each year to the  
120 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
121 House of Representatives.

122 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.