

By Senator Hutson

7-00542A-24

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to the Swimming Lesson Voucher  
3       Program; creating s. 514.073, F.S.; creating the  
4       program within the Department of Health for a  
5       specified purpose; requiring the department to  
6       contract with and establish a network of swimming  
7       lesson vendors to participate in the program;  
8       requiring the department to attempt to secure a vendor  
9       in each county; requiring certain vendors to  
10      participate in the program if requested by the  
11      department; requiring the department to establish an  
12      application process; specifying eligibility criteria  
13      for the program; providing that the program is subject  
14      to specific appropriation; authorizing the department  
15      to seek grants or other public and private funding for  
16      the program; requiring the department to adopt rules;  
17      providing an effective date.

18  
19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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21       Section 1. Section 514.073, Florida Statutes, is created to  
22       read:

23       514.073 Swimming Lesson Voucher Program.—

24       (1) There is created within the department the Swimming  
25       Lesson Voucher Program. The purpose of the program is to  
26       increase water safety in this state by offering vouchers for  
27       swimming lessons at no cost to families with an income of no  
28       more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level who have one  
29       or more children 4 years of age or younger.

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30 (2) The department shall do all of the following to  
31 implement the program:

32 (a) Contract with and establish a network of swimming  
33 lesson vendors that will accept the vouchers offered by the  
34 program in exchange for providing swimming lessons. To ensure  
35 that the swimming lessons are available throughout this state,  
36 the department must attempt to secure at least one such vendor  
37 in each county. Any swimming lesson vendor that offers swimming  
38 lessons at a public pool that is owned or maintained by a county  
39 or municipality must, if requested by the department,  
40 participate in the program.

41 (b) Establish a method for members of the public to apply  
42 for swimming lesson vouchers and for determining an applicant's  
43 eligibility. The department shall establish eligibility criteria  
44 necessary for a family to receive one or more vouchers from the  
45 program, including, but not limited to, the following:

46 1. The age of each child for whom a voucher is being  
47 sought, who may be no more than 4 years of age.

48 2. The family income level, which may be up to 200 percent  
49 of the federal poverty level.

50 3. The family's address of residency in this state.

51 (c) Subject to specific appropriation, issue vouchers to  
52 eligible applicants.

53 (3) The department may seek grants or other public or  
54 private funding for the program.

55 (4) The department shall adopt rules to implement the  
56 program.

57 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.