

CHAPTER 98-307

Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 3145

An act relating to health care; creating s. 381.0045, F.S.; creating the “Targeted Outreach for Pregnant Women Act of 1998”; providing purpose; requiring the Department of Health to establish a pilot program; providing requirements; requiring interim and final reports; providing appropriations; repealing s. 206.606(1)(c) relating to the distribution of certain proceeds with respect to motor fuel taxes; providing effective dates.

WHEREAS, Florida ranks second in the nation in the number of female AIDS cases and pediatric AIDS cases, and

WHEREAS, approximately 700 HIV-exposed women give birth each year in Florida, and

WHEREAS, the administration of Zidovudine (AZT) to pregnant HIV-exposed women can reduce the rate of mother-to-child transmission by as much as two-thirds, while without it approximately 210 of the 700 babies born to HIV-exposed women in Florida would test positive for HIV, and

WHEREAS, thousands of infants born each year in Florida are identified as prenatally substance-exposed, and

WHEREAS, the effect on a fetus from drugs can result in a lifetime of devastating physical and mental problems for the child, and

WHEREAS, the lifetime cost of treating an HIV-infected infant can be as high as \$200,000, and the cost of caring for drug-exposed infants can be as high as \$65,000, with special classes for substance-exposed children costing approximately \$17,000 per year, and

WHEREAS, there is a strong need to reach out to pregnant women who do not seek prenatal care, substance abuse treatment, or HIV testing due to poverty, lack of transportation, lack of education, lack of health insurance, fear of legal consequences, fear of domestic violence, and fear of losing their child, and

WHEREAS, preventing perinatally transmitted HIV infection and substance exposure depends on maximizing the opportunities for pregnant women to learn their HIV status, to be offered and receive preventive AZT therapy, and to gain access to drug treatment and other health and social services for themselves and their infants, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. Section 381.0045, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

381.0045 Targeted outreach for pregnant women.—

(1) This section may be cited as the "Targeted Outreach for Pregnant Women Act of 1998."

(2) It is the purpose of this section to establish a targeted outreach program for high-risk pregnant women who may not seek proper prenatal care, who suffer from substance abuse problems, or who are infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and to provide these women with links to much needed services and information.

(3) Effective October 1, 1998, the Department of Health shall establish a 2-year pilot program to provide outreach services to high-risk pregnant women, based in county health departments in the five counties with the highest rates of HIV infection in pregnant women and the largest proportion of substance-exposed newborns. These counties shall include Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Hillsborough, and Orange Counties.

(4) The department shall:

(a) Conduct outreach programs through contracts with, grants to, or other working relationships with persons or entities where the target population is likely to be found.

(b) Provide outreach that is peer-based, culturally sensitive, and performed in a nonjudgmental manner.

(c) Encourage high-risk pregnant women of unknown status to be tested for HIV.

(d) Educate women not receiving prenatal care as to the benefits of such care.

(e) Provide HIV-infected pregnant women with information so they can make an informed decision about the use of Zidovudine (AZT).

(f) Link women with substance abuse treatment, when available, and act as a liaison with Healthy Start coalitions, children's medical services, Ryan White-funded providers, and other services of the Department of Health.

(g) Provide continued oversight to HIV-exposed newborns.

(5) The types of entities the department is encouraged to contract with, provide grants to, or enter into other working relationships with may include, but are not limited to, faith-based organizations, academic institutions, religious organizations, nonprofit community centers, and other social-services-related entities.

Section 2. The Department of Health shall compile and analyze the risk information collected by the targeted outreach programs and other services of the Department of Health, including Healthy Start coalitions, children's medical services, and Ryan White-funded providers, and submit to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate an interim report by December 1, 1999, and a final report by December 1, 2000, that includes, but is not limited to:

(1) The number of pregnant women and infants identified as at potential risk of HIV infection or substance abuse.

(2) The number of pregnant women and infants who receive outreach services.

(3) The demand for services and unmet need for services for the identified target groups.

(4) An assessment of the program's success in reaching high-risk pregnant women and providing these women and their infants with much needed services and information.

(5) Recommendations regarding whether the program should be continued or expanded statewide, the funding necessary to continue or expand the program, and any additional efforts that are necessary to maximize the success of the program.

Section 3. There is hereby appropriated a lump sum of \$15,600,000 from the Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund and \$1,400,000 from non-recurring General Revenue for the following:

Implementation of the act; to replace the Tampa Branch Health Laboratory; for construction/renovation of the Hendry County Health Department; the Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies facility at the University of South Florida; and for the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida.

Section 4. Effective July 1, 1998, paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 206.606, Florida Statutes, as amended by chapter 96-321, Laws of Florida, is hereby repealed.

Section 5. This act shall take effect October 1, 1998, except that this section and section 4 of this act shall take effect July 1, 1998.

Approved by the Governor May 29, 1998.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1998.