

## House Bill No. 615

An act relating to federally qualified health centers; creating the “Federally Qualified Health Center Access Program Act”; providing legislative findings and intent; providing for expansion of federally qualified health centers to provide comprehensive primary and preventive health care services; providing for financial assistance to centers that meet specified criteria; specifying that funds must be used for certain operating costs or capital improvement projects; providing contract requirements; providing for appointment of a panel to review applications for financial assistance; providing responsibilities of the Department of Health and the Florida Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.; providing for administration of the program and technical assistance to centers selected to receive financial assistance; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Federally qualified health center access program.—

(1) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Community Health Center Access Program Act.”

(2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature finds that, despite significant investments in health care programs, more than 2 million low-income Floridians, primarily the working poor and minority populations, continue to lack access to basic health care services. Further, the Legislature recognizes that federally qualified health centers have a proven record of providing cost-effective, comprehensive primary and preventive health care and are uniquely qualified to address the lack of adequate health care services for the uninsured.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to recognize the significance of increased federal investments in federally qualified health centers and to leverage that investment through the creation of a program to provide for the expansion of the primary and preventive health care services offered by federally qualified health centers. Further, such a program will support the coordination of federal, state, and local resources to assist such health centers in developing an expanded community-based primary care delivery system.

(3) ASSISTANCE TO FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS.—The Department of Health shall develop a program for the expansion of federally qualified health centers for the purpose of providing comprehensive primary and preventive health care services, including services that may reduce the morbidity, mortality, and cost of care among the uninsured population of the state. The program shall provide for distribution of financial assistance to federally qualified health centers that apply and demonstrate a need for such assistance in order to sustain or expand the

delivery of primary and preventive health care services. In selecting centers to receive this financial assistance, the program:

(a) Shall give preference to communities that have few or no community-based primary care services or in which the current services are unable to meet the community's needs.

(b) Shall require that primary care services be provided to the medically indigent using a sliding fee schedule based on income.

(c) Shall allow innovative and creative uses of federal, state, and local health care resources.

(d) Shall require that the funds provided be used to pay for operating costs of a projected expansion in patient caseloads or services or for capital improvement projects. Capital improvement projects may include renovations to existing facilities or construction of new facilities, provided that an expansion in patient caseloads or services to a new patient population will occur as a result of the capital expenditures. The department shall include in its standard contract document a requirement that any state funds provided for the purchase of or improvements to real property are contingent upon the contractor granting to the state a security interest in the property at least to the amount of the state funds provided for at least 5 years from the date of purchase or the completion of the improvements or as further required by law. The contract must include a provision that, as a condition of receipt of state funding for this purpose, the contractor agrees that, if it disposes of the property before the department's interest is vacated, the contractor will refund the proportionate share of the state's initial investment, as adjusted by depreciation.

(e) May require in-kind support from other sources.

(f) May encourage coordination among federally qualified health centers, other private-sector providers, and publicly supported programs.

(4) EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.—A review panel shall be established, consisting of four persons appointed by the Secretary of Health and three persons appointed by the chief executive officer of the Florida Association of Community Health Centers, Inc., to review all applications for financial assistance under the program. Applicants shall specify in the application whether the program funds will be used for the expansion of patient caseloads or services or for capital improvement projects to expand and improve patient facilities. The panel shall use the following elements in reviewing application proposals and shall determine the relative weight for scoring and evaluating these elements:

(a) The target population to be served.

(b) The health benefits to be provided.

(c) The methods that will be used to measure cost-effectiveness.

(d) How patient satisfaction will be measured.

- (e) The proposed internal quality assurance process.
- (f) Projected health status outcomes.
- (g) How data will be collected to measure cost-effectiveness, health status outcomes, and overall achievement of the goals of the proposal.
- (h) All resources, including cash, in-kind, voluntary, or other resources that will be dedicated to the proposal.

(5) ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Department of Health may contract with the Florida Association of Community Health Centers, Inc., to administer the program and provide technical assistance to the federally qualified health centers selected to receive financial assistance.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.

Approved by the Governor May 30, 2002.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 30, 2002.