

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1991

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SENATE BILL 595

Veteran and Military Affairs, Law Enforcement, and Senior Citizens
Committee Substitute Adopted 5/1/91

Short Title: Access to Health Insurance Study.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 11, 1991

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CREATE A STUDY ON ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE.

Whereas, providing uninsured North Carolinians with access to affordable health insurance is a public policy issue of high priority; and

Whereas, at any one time nearly one in every seven North Carolinians is without health insurance; and

Whereas, the lack of access to health insurance is also a national problem which affects between 33 million and 37 million Americans; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The Commission on Access to Health Insurance is created. The Commission shall design a program to ensure that all citizens of the State have access to affordable health insurance that provides coverage for basic health care needs. In designing the program, the Commission shall consider:

(1) Programs the State could implement to provide health insurance coverage at an affordable price to all North Carolinians, including the feasibility of:

a. An employer based health insurance plan, which would include a State pool to cover those who are not in the labor force, and the need for tax incentives to enable certain employers to offer health insurance; and

b. A comprehensive single payor plan, based on the Canadian health care model.

- 1 (2) Methods of containing the rising costs of health insurance.
2 (3) The need for health insurance reform.
3 (4) The benefits to be included in a basic health care package.
4 (5) How the Access Forum, convened by the North Carolina Institute of
5 Medicine, and other states have proposed to address the problem
6 surrounding access to adequate and affordable health insurance.

7 Sec. 2. The Commission shall consist of 26 members as follows:

- 8 (1) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint nine
9 members as follows: five members of the House of Representatives;
10 one member who is the president or vice-president of a business
11 employing less than 20 employees; one member who represents a
12 health maintenance organization that provides health care in the State;
13 one member who is a hospital administrator; and one member who is a
14 public member who is uninsured;
15 (2) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint nine members
16 as follows: five members of the Senate; one member who is the
17 president or vice-president of a business employing more than 100
18 employees; one member who is a health care provider; one member
19 who represents an insurance company that provides health insurance
20 coverage in this State; and one public member who is knowledgeable
21 about the problems of the uninsured;
22 (3) The President of the North Carolina Medical Society, or his
23 representative;
24 (4) The President of the North Carolina Hospital Association, or his
25 representative;
26 (5) The Commissioner of Insurance, or Deputy Commissioner of
27 Insurance;
28 (6) President of North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry;
29 (7) President of Merchants Association;
30 (8) The President of the Foundation for Alternative Health Programs;
31 (9) The President of the State Employees Association of North Carolina;
32 and
33 (10) The President of the North Carolina AFL-CIO.

34 Vacancies in the membership appointed under subdivisions (1) and (2) of this
35 section shall be filled by the official who made the initial appointment using the same
36 criteria as provided in this section.

37 All initial appointments shall be made within 30 days of the effective date
38 of this act.

39 Sec. 3. The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall designate one Senator
40 as cochair and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate one
41 Representative as cochair.

42 Sec. 4. In addition to its regular meetings, the Commission shall hold three
43 public hearings across the State, to solicit input about the extent of the problem of the

1 uninsured and underinsured, and potential solutions to ensure that all citizens have
2 access to adequate and affordable health care.

3 Sec. 5. The Commission shall submit an interim report on the role of the
4 State in solving the health insurance dilemma on or before the first day of the 1991
5 General Assembly, Regular Session 1992, by filing the report with the President Pro
6 Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

7 Sec. 6. The Commission shall submit a final report of its findings and
8 recommendations to the General Assembly on or before the first day of the 1993
9 Session of the General Assembly by filing the report with the President Pro Tempore of
10 the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Upon filing its final report,
11 the Commission shall terminate.

12 Sec. 7. Members of the Commission shall receive subsistence and travel
13 expenses at the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, and 138-6, as applicable.

14 Sec. 8. The Commission may contract for clerical or professional staff or for
15 any other services it may require in the course of its ongoing study. At the request of
16 the Commission, the Legislative Services Commission may supply members of the staff
17 of the Legislative Services Office and clerical assistance to the Commission as the
18 Legislative Services Commission deems appropriate. The Commission may, with the
19 approval of the Legislative Services Commission, meet in the State Legislative Building
20 or the Legislative Office Building.

21 Sec. 9. The Commission may accept gifts, grants, donations, or contributions
22 from any source. These funds shall be held in a separate account and used solely in
23 furtherance of the study.

24 Sec. 10. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General
25 Assembly for fiscal year 1991-92 the sum of \$100,000 and for fiscal year 1992-93 the
26 sum of \$100,000 for the expenses of the Commission.

27 Sec. 11. This act becomes effective July 1, 1991.