

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009

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HOUSE BILL 1294
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/5/09
Third Edition Engrossed 5/13/09
Senate Commerce Committee Substitute Adopted 6/2/09
Fifth Edition Engrossed 6/3/09

Short Title: NC Risk Pool Premiums/Notice Requirements.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 9, 2009

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH INSURANCE RISK POOL
3 TO PROVIDE PREMIUM SUBSIDIES IF FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE AND TO
4 REQUIRE INSURERS TO NOTIFY APPLICANTS FOR HEALTH INSURANCE
5 COVERAGE ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE POOL.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 58-50-180(e) reads as rewritten:

8 "(e) The Pool shall have the general powers and authority granted under the laws of this
9 State to health insurers and the specific authority to do all of the following:

- 10 (1) Enter into contracts as are necessary or proper to carry out the provisions
11 and purposes of this Part, including the authority, with the approval of the
12 Executive Director acting upon the approval or authorization of the Board, to
13 enter into contracts with similar plans of other states for the joint
14 performance of common administrative functions or with persons or other
15 organizations for the performance of administrative functions.
16 (2) Sue or be sued.
17 (3) Take legal action as necessary to:
18 a. Avoid the payment of improper claims against the Pool or the
19 coverage provided by or through the Plan.
20 b. Recover any amounts erroneously or improperly paid by the Plan.
21 c. Recover any amounts paid by the Pool as a result of mistake of fact
22 or law.
23 d. Recover other amounts due the Pool.
24 (4) Establish rates and rate schedules in accordance with this Part.
25 (4a) Provide premium subsidies if federal grant funds are available for
26 individuals with incomes up to three hundred percent (300%) of the federal
27 poverty guidelines and the Board deems it is fiscally prudent to do so.
28 (5) Issue policies of insurance in accordance with the requirements of this Part.
29 (6) Appoint appropriate legal, actuarial, and other committees as necessary to
30 provide technical assistance in the operation of the Pool, policy, and other
31 contract design, and any other function within the Pool's authority.
32 (7) Establish policies, conditions, and procedures for reinsuring risks of
33 participating health insurers, as defined in G.S. 58-68-25(a), desiring to issue



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1 Pool coverage in their own name. Provision of reinsurance shall not subject
2 the Pool to any of the capital or surplus requirements, if any, otherwise
3 applicable to reinsurers.

4 (8) Employ and fix the compensation of employees.

5 (9) Prepare and distribute certificate of eligibility forms and enrollment
6 instruction forms to insurance producers and to the general public.

7 (10) Provide for reinsurance for the Pool.

8 (11) Issue additional types of health insurance policies to provide optional
9 coverage, including Medicare supplemental insurance coverage.

10 (12) Provide for and employ cost containment measures and requirements
11 including preadmission screening, second surgical opinion, concurrent
12 utilization review, disease management, individual case management, health
13 and wellness programs including a smoking cessation initiative, and other
14 commonly used benefit plan design features for the purpose of making
15 health insurance coverage offered by the Pool more cost-effective.

16 (13) Design, utilize, contract, or otherwise arrange for the delivery of
17 cost-effective health care services, including establishing or contracting with
18 preferred provider organizations, health maintenance organizations, and
19 other limited network provider arrangements.

20 (14) Adopt bylaws, policies, and procedures as may be necessary or convenient
21 for the implementation of this Part and the operation of the Pool."

22 **SECTION 2.** Article 3 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
23 a new section to read:

24 **"§ 58-3-276. Notice relating to the North Carolina Health Insurance Risk Pool.**

25 (a) An insurer shall provide a written notice of the existence of the North Carolina
26 Health Insurance Risk Pool to an applicant for individual health insurance coverage upon the
27 insurer making a determination that the applicant is eligible for coverage by the Pool as
28 provided in G.S. 58-50-195(a)(1) or (2).

29 (b) The notice required in subsection (a) of this section shall be provided to an applicant
30 no later than 10 business days after the insurer reaches a determination under subsection (a) of
31 this section. An insurer may provide a single notice relating to multiple applicants located at a
32 single address provided the notice lists the name of each individual affected separately.

33 (c) The Commissioner may adopt rules to implement this section, including rules
34 establishing the language, content, format, and methods of distribution of the notice required by
35 this section.

36 (d) For purposes of this section:

37 (1) "Applicant" means any person who seeks to contract for individual health
38 insurance coverage, including any dependent for which application is made
39 and about whom an independent underwriting decision is made by an
40 insurer.

41 (2) "Health insurance coverage" is as defined in G.S. 58-50-175(10).

42 (3) "Insurer" is as defined in G.S. 58-50-175(13)."

43 **SECTION 3.** Section 1.4 of S.L. 2007-532 reads as rewritten:

44 **"SECTION 1.4.** Notwithstanding G.S. 58-50-210(a), individuals enrolling in the Pool
45 within ~~six months~~ 12 months of the date that enrollment into the Pool first begins shall be
46 subject to a six-month preexisting condition waiting period."

47 **SECTION 4.** Section 2 of this act applies to applications for health insurance
48 coverage made on or after October 1, 2009. The remainder of this act is effective when it
49 becomes law.