

Legislative Analysis



HCV EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND TASKFORCE

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House Bill 5014 as enrolled
Public Act 239 of 2006
Sponsor: Rep. Kevin Green

House Bill 5015 as enrolled
Public Act 238 of 2006
Sponsor: Rep. Roger Kahn
Committee: Health Policy

Complete to 2-2-07

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 5014 AND 5015 AS ENROLLED

House Bill 5014 would amend the Public Health Code to require the Department of Community Health to utilize the Michigan Health Initiative Fund to make available educational materials on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of the Hepatitis C virus (HCV) to health care workers, veterans, public safety officers, parolees and other individuals, in written and electronic forms. The materials would have to include the recommendations of the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the Hepatitis C virus.

(The bill would define "public safety officer" to mean any individual serving a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, or emergency services personnel.)

MCL 333.5297

House Bill 5015 would amend the Public Health Code to create the Hepatitis C Advisory Task Force.

Task Force Composition

The Governor would appoint the task force with the advice and consent of the Senate. The task force would consist of 11 members, including the director of the Department of Community Health, or a designee, as an ex-officio member, with one member from an association representing local public health, and one member from each of the following categories: business and industry, labor, health care providers, the legal community, religious organizations, state and local government, and education. The appointed health care provider member could not be an employee or a representative of a state executive department or a local health department. The members would have to represent, to the extent practicable, the demographic composition of the state. Members would serve three-year terms, although the initial terms would be staggered. The task force would have to comply with the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Task Force Responsibilities

Under the bill, the task force would be required to do all of the following:

- Meet at least quarterly at the call of the chairperson.
- Advise the Governor and the Legislature on policies regarding Hepatitis C and risk reduction.
- Annually report to the Governor and the Legislature on major risk factors and preventable diseases or conditions, including HCV.
- Make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the allocation of money from the Michigan Health Initiative fund, including the level of funding for grants.
- Review and comment to the department on topics the task force determines appropriate for a media campaign.
- Review and identify additional funding mechanisms and sources to cover the cost of outreach, awareness, and testing for HCV.
- Make recommendations to the department regarding information to be utilized and incorporated into the HCV information package, to include information regarding the status of HCV in the state, state-supported testing and counseling programs, and research findings.

Health Initiative Fund Provisions

The bill would amend to the sections of the Public Health Code dealing with the Health Initiative Fund to include specific references to HCV. Currently, the fund is used to provide HIV testing free of charge to all residents of the state and nonresident college students. Under the bill, if additional funds are available the DCH would have to utilize the funds to provide free HCV testing to residents of the state identified as high-risk and who do not have health insurance, coverage, or benefits.

Repealers

The bill would repeal sections of the code that created the Risk Reduction and AIDS Policy Commission. The commission was abolished and its duties transferred to DCH by Executive Reorganization Order 1996-1.

MCL 333.5091 et al.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 5014 and House Bill 5015 have fiscal implications for the Department of Community Health and the use of the Michigan Health Initiative Fund. The Sales Tax Act establishes that \$9.0 to \$12.0 million shall be annually deposited to the Michigan Health Initiative Fund of sales taxes collected from sales of computer software. In Fiscal Year 2005-06, \$10.1 million of the Michigan Health Initiative Fund was appropriated in the Department of Community Health budget in 9 program areas. Current law indicates

priority uses for the Michigan Health Initiative Fund, not all of which have been funded in recent years due to state revenue constraints.

House Bill 5014 affects the Fund with a new required use of the funds for educational materials on the Hepatitis C virus.

House Bill 5015 affects the Michigan Health Initiative Fund by placing a priority on the Hepatitis C virus as a focal issue of the Initiative, including the establishment of a permanent new Task Force and a model information package. Costs to support a Task Force may require additional staffing with a possible annual cost of \$30,000-\$100,000, depending on the level of activity of the Task Force. If funds are available the bill allows for free HCV testing to high risk persons who do not have health insurance. Free counseling is also provided for when free testing is provided. Local health departments would be reimbursed by the state.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.