

February 23, 2009

**S 282. AID TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS/FUNDS.** Filed 2/23/09. *TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, OFFICE OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATIONS, AND RURAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT, FOR A GRANT PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF PRIMARY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICAL SERVICES TO UNDERINSURED OR MEDICALLY INDIGENT PATIENTS.*

Appropriates \$10 million for 2009-10 from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Research, Demonstrations, and Rural Health Development (Office), to be allocated as grants on a competitive basis to federally qualified health centers and those health centers that meet the criteria for federally qualified health centers, state-designed rural health centers, free clinics, public health departments, and other nonprofits that provide primary and preventive medical services to underinsured or medically indigent patients. Specifies uses for grant funds. Prohibits grant funds from being used to (1) enhance or increase existing compensation or other benefits of personnel, administrators, directors, consultants, or any other parties; (2) supplant federal funds traditionally received by federally qualified community health centers; and (3) finance or satisfy existing debt. Requires that DHHS, when distributing funds, consider the availability of other funds for the agency, the incidence of poverty or number of indigent clients served, arrangements for after-hours care, and collaboration with the applicant's community hospital and other safety net organizations.

Requires that the Office work with the North Carolina Community Health Center Association (NCCHCA) and the North Carolina Public Health Association (NCPHA) to establish an advisory committee to develop an objective and equitable process for awarding grant funds. Directs the Office to develop auditing and accountability procedures and limits funds for administering the grant program to 1% of the appropriated funds.

Requires recipients of grant funds to annually report to the Office on the number of uninsured and medically indigent patients cared for, the types of services provided, and any other information requested by the Office.

Requires that the Office work with the NCCHCA and NCPHA to study and present recommendations for continuing funds to support the expansion of community health centers, state-designated rural health centers, free clinics, and public health departments to serve more of the state's underinsured and indigent population. Requires DHHS to report on the use of these funds to specified legislative committees and the Fiscal Research Division by March 1, 2010.

Effective July 1, 2009.

**Intro. by Purcell.**

APPROP, STUDY