

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL DRS15186-MGa-88

Short Title: Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Murdock and Salvador (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO
3 CONDUCT AND SUPPORT RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE CURRENT
4 INFORMATION REGARDING UTERINE FIBROIDS; AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
5 FOR THESE PURPOSES.

6 Whereas, in the United States, an estimated 26,000,000 women between the ages of
7 15 and 50 have uterine fibroids and screening studies indicate the prevalence of uterine fibroids
8 in women may be much higher; and

9 Whereas, uterine fibroids may cause significant morbidity through their presence in
10 the uterus and pelvic cavity, causing significant pelvic pain, iron-deficiency anemia, heavy
11 bleeding, miscarriages, and infertility; and

12 Whereas, the pain, discomfort, stress, and other physical and emotional symptoms of
13 living with fibroids may significantly interfere with a woman's quality of life, compromising her
14 ability to function normally or work or care for her family, and may lead to more severe health
15 and wellness issues; and

16 Whereas, the development of uterine fibroids is a common and significant health
17 problem, affecting women, primarily of reproductive age, across all ages, racial backgrounds,
18 and socioeconomic levels; and

19 Whereas, women who are members of racial and ethnic minority groups are more
20 likely to develop uterine fibroids, with African American women having been shown to have
21 more severe symptoms and to develop early-onset uterine fibroids that develop into larger
22 tumors; and

23 Whereas, there is little to no data describing the overall patient experience with
24 fibroids; quantifying the costs associated with treating fibroids; or identifying proven,
25 evidence-based methods by which fibroids may be prevented; and

26 Whereas, according to the Evidence Report Summary on the Management of Uterine
27 Fibroids, as compiled by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality of the United States
28 Department of Health and Human Services, there is a "remarkable lack of high-quality evidence
29 supporting the effectiveness of most interventions for symptomatic fibroids"; and

30 Whereas, the presence of symptomatic uterine fibroids is the most common reason
31 for hysterectomies, accounting for approximately one-third of hysterectomies, or 200,000
32 procedures annually; and twenty-two percent (22%) of African American women and seven
33 percent (7%) of Caucasian women have hysterectomies as a result of uterine fibroids; and

34 Whereas, lack of patient and provider awareness of less invasive alternatives to
35 hysterectomies leads to an estimated 80,000 to 120,000 unnecessary hysterectomies annually;
36 and



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1 Whereas, uterine fibroids are also the leading cause of hospitalization related to a
2 gynecological disorder; and

3 Whereas, the personal and societal costs of uterine fibroids in the United States are
4 significant and include costs related to surgery, hospital admissions, outpatient visits,
5 medications, and lost working hours; Now, therefore,

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Uterine Fibroid
8 Research and Education Act of 2023."

9 **SECTION 2.** Part 8 of Article 5 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended
10 by adding a new section to read:

11 **"§ 130A-131.26. Uterine fibroid research and education.**

12 (a) The Department, in collaboration with the agencies, institutions, and organizations
13 delineated in subsection (b) of this section, shall do the following:

14 (1) Establish, expand, intensify, and coordinate programs to conduct and support
15 research regarding uterine fibroids, with special emphasis on women who are
16 members of racial and ethnic minority groups who are known to be
17 disproportionately affected by uterine fibroids.

18 (2) Collect data on items and services furnished to women receiving Medicaid
19 and other State-funded healthcare services who have been diagnosed with
20 uterine fibroids and uterine fibroids-related symptoms for the purpose of
21 assessing the frequency at which such women are furnished such items and
22 services.

23 (3) Develop, annually update, and disseminate to healthcare providers
24 information on uterine fibroids for the purpose of ensuring that healthcare
25 providers remain informed about the most current information on uterine
26 fibroids. Such information shall include the elevated risk for women who are
27 members of racial and ethnic minority groups to develop uterine fibroids and
28 the range of available options for the treatment of symptomatic uterine
29 fibroids, including non-hysterectomy drugs and devices approved under the
30 federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. § 301, et seq.

31 (4) Beginning April 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, report to the Joint
32 Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services on any
33 research and education activities undertaken by the Department pursuant to
34 this section.

35 (b) In fulfilling the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, the Department shall
36 collaborate with representatives of the following:

37 (1) The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities.

38 (2) The Division of Public Health.

39 (3) The Division of Health Benefits.

40 (4) The Department of State Treasurer, State Health Plan Division.

41 (5) Colleges and universities located within the State that have conducted or are
42 conducting research on uterine fibroids.

43 (6) The Old North State Medical Society.

44 (7) The North Carolina Medical Society.

45 (8) Any other organizations located within the State that the Department deems
46 relevant to the study and collection of data on uterine fibroids."

47 **SECTION 3.** Effective July 1, 2023, there is appropriated to the Department of
48 Health and Human Services the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in recurring
49 funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year and the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in
50 recurring funds for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to conduct the research and education activities
51 required by Section 2 of this act.

1 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective October 1,
2 2023.