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SENATE BILL 6197

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senators Franklin, Regala, Eide, Prentice, Fraser, Brown, Kline, Kohl-Welles and Shin

Read first time 01/09/2006. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of the governor's interagency  
2 council on health disparities; amending RCW 43.20.025; and adding new  
3 sections to chapter 43.20 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that people of color experience significant  
8 disparities from the general population in education, employment,  
9 healthful living conditions, access to health care, and other social  
10 determinants of health. The legislature finds that these circumstances  
11 coupled with lower, slower, and less culturally appropriate access to  
12 needed medical care result in higher rates of morbidity and mortality  
13 for persons of color than observed in the general population. Health  
14 disparities is defined by the national institute of health as the  
15 differences in incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of disease  
16 and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific  
17 population groups in the United States. It is the intent of the  
18 Washington state legislature to create the healthiest state in the

1 nation by striving to eliminate health disparities in women and people  
2 of color. In meeting the intent of this act, the legislature creates  
3 the governor's interagency council on health disparities.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.20.025 and 1989 1st ex.s. c 9 s 208 are each  
5 amended to read as follows:

6 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in  
7 this section apply throughout this chapter.

8 (1) "Commissions" means the Washington state commission on African-  
9 American affairs established in chapter 43.113 RCW, the Washington  
10 state commission on Asian Pacific American affairs established in  
11 chapter 43.117 RCW, the Washington state commission on Hispanic affairs  
12 established in chapter 43.115 RCW, and the governor's office of Indian  
13 affairs.

14 (2) "Consumer representative" means any person who is not an  
15 elected official, who has no fiduciary obligation to a health facility  
16 or other health agency, and who has no material financial interest in  
17 the rendering of health services.

18 ~~((+2))~~ (3) "Council" means the ((health care access and cost  
19 control)) governor's health disparities coordinating council, convened  
20 according to this chapter.

21 ~~((+3))~~ (4) "Department" means the department of health.

22 ~~((+4))~~ (5) "Health disparities" means the difference in incidence,  
23 prevalence, mortality, or burden of disease and other adverse health  
24 conditions, including lack of access to proven health care services  
25 that exists between specific population groups in Washington state.

26 (6) "Health impact assessment" means a systematic review of a  
27 legislative or budgetary proposal or other public policy, program, or  
28 practice completed according to the terms of this chapter that  
29 determines the extent to which such proposal, policy, program, or  
30 practice improves or exacerbates health disparities.

31 (7) "Secretary" means the secretary of health, or the secretary's  
32 designee.

33 ~~((+5))~~ (8) "Local health board" means a health board created  
34 pursuant to chapter 70.05, 70.08, or 70.46 RCW.

35 ~~((+6))~~ (9) "Local health officer" means the legally qualified  
36 physician appointed as a health officer pursuant to chapter 70.05,  
37 70.08, or 70.46 RCW.

1       (~~(7)~~) (10) "Social determinants of health" means those elements  
2 of social structure most closely shown to affect health and illness,  
3 including at a minimum, early learning, education, socioeconomic  
4 standing, safe housing, sanitary environmental conditions, gender,  
5 incidence of violence, convenient and affordable access to safe  
6 opportunities for physical activity, healthy diet, clean water, clean  
7 air, toxin-free environments, and appropriate health care services.

8       (11) "State board" means the state board of health created under  
9 chapter 43.20 RCW.

10       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20 RCW  
11 to read as follows:

12       (1) In collaboration with staff whom the office of financial  
13 management may assign, and within funds made expressly available to the  
14 state board for these purposes, the state board shall assist the  
15 governor by convening and providing assistance to the governor's  
16 interagency council on health disparities. The council shall include  
17 one representative from each of the following groups: Each of the  
18 commissions, the state board, the department, the department of social  
19 and health services, the employment security department, the department  
20 of community, trade, and economic development, the department of  
21 corrections, the health care authority, the department of labor and  
22 industries, the department of agriculture, the department of ecology,  
23 the higher education coordinating board, the department of  
24 transportation, the state board for community and technical colleges,  
25 the work force training and education coordinating board, and two  
26 members of the public who will represent the interests of health care  
27 consumers. The governor or the governor's designee shall chair the  
28 commission.

29       (2) The council shall promote and facilitate communication,  
30 coordination, and collaboration among relevant state agencies and  
31 communities of color to address health disparities. The council shall  
32 conduct public hearings, inquiries, studies, or other forms of  
33 information gathering to understand how the actions of state government  
34 ameliorate or contribute to health disparities. Within the limits of  
35 their resources, all state agencies must cooperate with the council's  
36 efforts.

1 (3) The council with assistance from the state board, shall assess  
2 through public hearings, review of existing data, and other means, and  
3 recommend initiatives for improving the availability of culturally  
4 appropriate health literature and interpretive services within public  
5 and private health-related agencies.

6 (4) In order to assist with its work, the council may establish  
7 advisory committees to include members from local communities.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.20 RCW  
9 to read as follows:

10 The governor's interagency council on health disparities shall  
11 consider in its deliberations an action plan for eliminating health  
12 disparities by 2012. The action plan must address, but is not limited  
13 to, the following diseases: Diabetes, asthma, infant mortality,  
14 HIV/AIDS, heart disease, strokes, breast cancer, cervical cancer,  
15 prostate cancer, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), mental health,  
16 smoking cessation, and immunization rates of children. The action plan  
17 shall be updated biannually. The council shall meet as often as  
18 necessary but not less than six times per calendar year. The council  
19 shall report its progress with the action plan to the governor and the  
20 legislature no later than January 15, 2008. A second report shall be  
21 presented no later than January 15, 2010, and a final report from the  
22 council shall be presented to the governor and the legislature no later  
23 than January 15, 2012.

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