

ASSEMBLY, No. 407

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblywomen HECK and CRECCO

1 AN ACT establishing the Office on Women's Health in the Department
2 of Health.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that: women tend to live
8 seven years longer than men and are at greater risk of having chronic
9 diseases; approximately 75% of residents in New Jersey's long-term
10 care facilities are women; almost 4%, or approximately 300,000
11 women in the State have no health insurance or inadequate coverage;
12 women of color experience a shorter life expectancy, higher maternal
13 and infant mortality, and more chronic disease; and it is important to
14 promote the prevention and early detection of diseases in women and
15 the equality of care, treatment and rehabilitation for women when they
16 become ill.

17 The Legislature further recognizes that: heart disease is the leading
18 cause of death for women, however, women with heart disease are not
19 diagnosed or treated as early or as aggressively as men, and the classic
20 risk profile for cardiovascular disease is based on a male model of
21 disease; breast cancer is the leading cause of death in women between
22 the ages of 35-50; New Jersey has higher than average rates for breast
23 cancer and the State ranks 32nd among all states for breast cancer
24 screening; there remains a tremendous need for education and
25 information regarding breast cancer symptoms, self-evaluation, routine
26 mammography, prevention programs and access to services; nearly one
27 fourth of pregnant women do not receive adequate prenatal care;
28 women constitute the fastest growing group of people with AIDS in
29 New Jersey; and domestic violence is a major health problem for
30 women nationally and in this State.

31 Therefore, it is necessary to create a special office to focus
32 exclusively on these crucial health concerns facing the women in New
33 Jersey.

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35 2. There is established the Office on Women's Health in the

1 Department of Health.

2 The office shall:

3 a. Provide grants to community-based organizations to conduct
4 special research, demonstration and evaluation projects on women's
5 health concerns;

6 b. Develop and implement model public and private partnerships
7 throughout the State for health awareness campaigns and to improve
8 the access, acceptability and use of public health services;

9 c. Serve as an information and resource center for women's health
10 information and data;

11 d. Function as an advocate for the adoption and implementation of
12 effective measures to improve women's health; and

13 e. Review the programs of the Departments of Health, Human
14 Services, Community Affairs and Education and any other department
15 of State government, as appropriate, that concern women's health and
16 make recommendations to the departments that will enable them to
17 better coordinate and improve the effectiveness of their efforts.

18

19 3. The Commissioner of Health shall appoint a director for the
20 office who shall serve at the pleasure of the commissioner during the
21 commissioner's term of office and until the appointment and
22 qualification of the director's successor. The director shall devote his
23 entire time to the duties of the position and shall receive a salary as
24 provided by law.

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26 4. The office shall:

27 a. Apply for and accept any grant of money from the federal
28 government, private foundations or other sources, which may be
29 available for programs related to women's health;

30 b. Serve as the designated State agency for receipt of federal funds
31 specifically designated for women's health programs; and

32 c. Enter into contracts with individuals, organizations, and
33 institutions necessary for the performance of its duties under this act.

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35 5. There is established a Women's Health Advisory Commission.

36 The commission shall consist of nine members, including the
37 Commissioner of Health or his designee, who shall serve ex officio,
38 and eight public members who are residents of the State and who shall
39 be appointed as follows: one member who is a health care professional
40 shall be appointed by the President of the Senate; one member who is
41 a health care professional shall be appointed by the Speaker of the
42 General Assembly; and six members, at least two of whom are health
43 care professionals, at least one of whom represents health care
44 facilities and at least one of whom represents the health insurance
45 industry, shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and
46 consent of the Senate. No less than five of the public members shall be

1 women.

2 The term of office of each public member shall be three years, but
3 of the members first appointed, two shall be appointed for a term of
4 one year, three shall be appointed for a term of two years and three
5 shall be appointed for a term of three years. A member shall hold
6 office for the term of his appointment and until his successor has been
7 appointed and qualified. All vacancies shall be filled for the balance
8 of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.
9 A member of the commission is eligible for reappointment.

10 The public members of the commission shall not receive any
11 compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for the actual
12 and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as
13 members of the commission, within the limits of funds available to the
14 commission.

15 The members of the commission shall annually elect a chairman and
16 a vice-chairman from among the public members and may select a
17 secretary, who need not be a member of the commission.

18 The Office on Women's Health in the Department of Health shall
19 provide staff and assistance which the commission requires to carry
20 out its work.

21

22 6. The commission shall:

23 a. Review and make recommendations to the Office on Women's
24 Health on any rules, regulations and policies proposed by the office:

25 b. Advise the office on the awarding of grants and development of
26 programs and services required pursuant to this act;

27 c. Advise the office on the needs, priorities, programs and policies
28 relating to women's health in this State; and

29 d. Provide any other assistance to the office, as may be requested
30 by the director.

31 The commission may accept from any governmental department or
32 agency, public or private body or any other source grants or
33 contributions to be used in carrying out its responsibilities under this
34 act.

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36 7. The Office on Women's Health shall report annually, by
37 September 1 of each year, to the Legislature and the Governor on the
38 activities of the office, including the projects and services developed
39 and funded by the office and the health care problems that the grant
40 funds are intended to ameliorate. The office may include in the report
41 any recommendations for administrative or legislative action that it
42 deems appropriate.

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44 8. The Office on Women's Health is entitled to call to its
45 assistance, and avail itself of, the services of employees of any State,
46 county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency

1 as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes. All
2 departments, agencies and divisions are authorized and directed, to the
3 extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate with the Office on
4 Women's Health.

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6 9. The Commissioner of Health shall adopt rules and regulations
7 pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410
8 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) to carry out the purposes of this act.

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10 10. This act shall take effect on the 60th day after enactment.

11 12 13 STATEMENT

14
15 This bill establishes the Office on Women's Health in the
16 Department of Health. The office shall:

17 1. Provide grants to community-based organizations to conduct
18 special research, demonstration and evaluation projects on women's
19 health concerns;

20 2. Develop and implement model public and private partnerships
21 throughout the State for health awareness campaigns and to improve
22 the access, acceptability and use of public health services;

23 3. Serve as an information and resource center for women's health
24 information and data;

25 4. Function as an advocate for the adoption and implementation of
26 effective measures to improve women's health; and

27 5. Review the programs of the Departments of Health, Human
28 Services, Community Affairs and Education and any other department
29 of State government, as appropriate, that concern women's health and
30 make recommendations to the departments that will enable them to
31 better coordinate and improve the effectiveness of their efforts.

32 The bill also establishes a nine-member Women's Health Advisory
33 Commission whose members shall include the Commissioner of Health
34 and eight public members to be appointed by the Governor, the
35 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly. No
36 less than five of the public members shall be women.

37 The Office on Women's Health shall report annually, by September
38 1 of each year, to the Legislature and the Governor on the activities of
39 the office, including the projects and services developed and funded by
40 the office and the health care problems that the grant funds are
41 intended to ameliorate. The office may include in the report any
42 recommendations for administrative or legislative action that it deems
43 appropriate

- 1 _____
- 2
- 3 Establishes the Office on Women's Health in DOH.