
SENATE BILL 6459

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senators Keiser, Brandland, Thibaudeau, Spanel, Rasmussen, Kline, Parlette and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/12/2006. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to community-based health care solutions; creating
2 new sections; making an appropriation; providing an effective date; and
3 providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Despite sustained efforts at the federal and state level, too
7 many people in Washington remain without access to appropriate health
8 care. Particularly alarming is the increase in the number of small
9 business employees who are uninsured. Without a health home, many low-
10 income and other vulnerable populations are left to inefficiently
11 navigate a fragmented treatment system that fails to support their
12 long-term well-being.

13 (2) In recent years, numerous community-based organizations have
14 emerged around the state to address health care concerns at a local
15 level. Through innovation and public/private collaboration, they have
16 demonstrated great success and show even greater promise in improving
17 health care access for local residents. Less remote than state and
18 federal agencies, these organizations have built on local relationships

1 to increase the availability and affordability of services, and
2 coordinate care, making efficient use of a wide variety of community
3 resources to meet community needs.

4 (3) Many of these organizations have relied on grants from the
5 healthy communities access program, an initiative of the United States
6 department of health and human services that provided funding and
7 technical assistance to support collaborative efforts at the local
8 level to coordinate and strengthen health services for the uninsured
9 and underinsured. The program, however, was recently discontinued,
10 placing these local efforts at risk.

11 It is therefore the intent of the legislature to enhance and
12 support the development of collaborative community-based organizations
13 working at the local level to increase access to health care for
14 Washington residents.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The community health care collaborative
16 grant program is established to further the efforts of community-based
17 organizations to increase access to appropriate, affordable health care
18 for Washington residents, particularly employed low-income persons who
19 are uninsured and underinsured, through local programs addressing one
20 or more of the following: (a) Access to medical treatment; (b) more
21 efficient use of health care resources; and (c) improvements in quality
22 of care.

23 (2) Grants of up to five hundred thousand dollars per organization
24 shall be awarded pursuant to sections 3 and 4 of this act by a board
25 consisting of: (a) The administrator of the health care authority; (b)
26 the secretary of the department of health; (c) the assistant secretary
27 of the health and recovery services administration within the
28 department of social and health services; (d) the insurance
29 commissioner; and (e) one other member, appointed by the governor, who
30 shall act as chair.

31 (3) Administrative support for the program shall be provided by the
32 health care authority.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Eligibility for grants shall be limited to
34 nonprofit organizations established to serve a defined substate
35 geographic region. The nature and format of the application, and the
36 application procedure, shall be determined by the board. At a minimum,

1 each application shall: (1) Identify the geographic region served by
2 the organization; (2) show how the structure and operation of the
3 organization reflects the interests of, and is accountable to, this
4 region; (3) indicate the size of the grant being requested, and how the
5 money will be spent; and (4) include sufficient information for the
6 board to evaluate the application based on the criteria established in
7 section 4 of this act.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) Grants shall be awarded on a competitive
9 basis based on the board's determination of which applicant
10 organization will best serve the purposes of the grant program. In
11 making this determination, the board shall consider the extent to
12 which:

13 (a) The programs to be supported by the grant are likely to
14 address, in a measurable fashion, documented health care access needs
15 within the region to be served;

16 (b) An applicant organization can be expected to successfully
17 implement these programs, including the extent to which the application
18 reflects active collaboration among key community members such as local
19 governments, school districts, large and small businesses, nonprofit
20 organizations, carriers, private health care providers, and public
21 health agencies;

22 (c) The applicant organization will match the grant with funds from
23 other sources. Grants may be awarded only to organizations providing
24 at least one dollar in new matching funds for each grant dollar
25 awarded;

26 (d) The grant will enhance the long-term capacity of the applicant
27 organization and its partners to serve the region's documented health
28 care access needs, including the sustainability of the programs to be
29 supported by the grant;

30 (e) The programs to be supported by the grant reflect creative,
31 innovative approaches which complement and enhance existing efforts to
32 address the needs of the uninsured and underinsured and, if successful,
33 could be replicated in other areas of the state; and

34 (f) The programs to be supported by the grant make efficient and
35 cost-effective use of available funds through administrative
36 simplification and improvements in the structure and operation of the
37 health care delivery system.

1 (2) The board shall endeavor to disburse grant funds throughout the
2 state, supporting organizations and programs of differing sizes and
3 scales, and serving differing populations.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** One-half the total amount of any award shall
5 be disbursed to an organization upon its selection as a grant
6 recipient. The remaining half shall be disbursed one year later only
7 upon receipt by the board of a progress report from the organization,
8 and a determination by the board that the organization is
9 satisfactorily serving the purposes of the grant program and meeting
10 the objectives identified in its application.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** By July 1, 2008, the board shall provide the
12 governor and the legislature with an evaluation of the community health
13 care collaborative grant program, describing the organizations and
14 programs funded and the results achieved. Particularly successful
15 programs shall be highlighted with recommendations on whether, and how,
16 the programs could be replicated statewide. The evaluation shall also
17 summarize any recommendations from the participating organizations
18 regarding ways to improve the grant program and for the state to
19 otherwise support community-based organizations working to improve
20 access to health care for Washington residents, including any changes
21 in state statutes or regulations.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The sum of three million one hundred
23 thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is
24 appropriated from the general fund to the health care authority for the
25 fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, to carry out the purposes of this
26 act. No more than one hundred thousand dollars may be used by the
27 health care authority for administrative expenses associated with the
28 program.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** This act takes effect July 1, 2006.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** This act expires June 30, 2009.

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