

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Universal Health Care System

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Overview

This bill requires the commissioner of health to establish a working group to design a universal health care system for Minnesota, and requires the commissioner to submit proposed legislation to the legislature by January 31, 2008, to establish a universal health care system to take effect in January 2010. The bill also proposes a constitutional amendment, to be submitted to the people at the 2006 general election, that if approved would state that every Minnesota resident has the right to comprehensive health care, and that it is the responsibility of the governor and the legislature to implement all necessary legislation to ensure affordable health care.

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- 1** **Legislative findings.** Provides a statement of findings that lists problems in the current health care system and the benefits of a universal health care system. Declares that it is in the public interest to establish a universal health care system for medical and economic reasons. Lists criteria for a universal health care system.
- 2** **Universal health care system.** Adds § 144.7055.

Subd. 1. Commissioner's working group. (a) Directs the commissioner of health to establish a working group to design a universal health care system for Minnesota. Requires the commissioner to prepare proposed legislation for submission to the legislature by January 31, 2008, to establish a universal health care system to take effect in January 2010. Requires the proposed legislation to meet all

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requirements in subdivision 2.

(b) Specifies that the working group is to include medical providers, patients, and representatives of employers and employees.

(c) Specifies that the working group expires January 31, 2008, and that members shall receive reimbursement for expenses but not per diems.

Subd. 2. Requirements for universal health care system. Requires the commissioner's proposal to the legislature to be designed in a manner that:

(1) ensures that all Minnesotans receive high quality health care, regardless of income;

(2) allows patients the ability to choose their own providers;

(3) focuses on preventive care and early intervention to improve health and to reduce later costs from untreated illnesses and diseases;

(4) provides comprehensive benefits, including all coverage currently required by law, complete mental health services, chemical dependency treatment, prescription drugs, medical equipment, dental care, long-term care, and home care services;

(5) continues promoting Minnesota's leadership in medical education, training, research, and technology;

(6) ensures an adequate number of providers and facilities to guarantee timely access to quality care;

(7) does not restrict or deny care or reduce the quality of care to hold down costs, but instead reduces costs through prevention, efficiency, and elimination of bureaucracy;

(8) provides adequate and timely payments to providers; and

(9) is funded through premiums and other payments based on the citizen's ability to pay, so as not to deny quality health care to all Minnesotans.

3 Constitutional amendment proposed. States that an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution is proposed. If the amendment is adopted, the section will read:

Sec. 13. Every Minnesota resident has the right to comprehensive health care. It is the responsibility of the governor and the legislature to implement all necessary legislation to ensure affordable health care.

4 Submission to voters. Requires the proposed amendment to be submitted to the people at the 2006 general election. Specifies that the amendment, if approved, is effective January 1, 2010. The question submitted shall be:

“Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to state that, effective January 1, 2010, every resident of Minnesota has the right to comprehensive health care and that it is the responsibility of the governor and the legislature to implement all necessary legislation to ensure affordable, comprehensive health care?”

Yes

No”

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5 **Effective date.** Provides that section 2 is effective the day following final enactment.