

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1989**

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**HOUSE BILL 2083**

Short Title: Caring Program for Children-Pilot.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representative Dickson.

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Referred to: Human Resources.

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May 24, 1990

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED**

**AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR A PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE  
HEALTH INSURANCE TO CHILDREN OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.**

Whereas, a study conducted by Duke University's Center for Health Policy Research and Education concluded that there are approximately 162,200 North Carolina children living at or below the poverty level who have no private or public health insurance coverage; and

Whereas, these children are typically in poorer health than the general public, use only half as many medical services as insured children, and usually go without health care except in emergencies; and

Whereas, lack of good health care during childhood may lead to immeasurable personal loss through unnecessary physical, mental, and emotional impairment; and

Whereas, the Caring Program for Children is a unique private sector initiative aimed at providing basic, preventive health care for North Carolina children whose families have incomes that are at or below the federal poverty guidelines, but who do not qualify for public health care programs such as Medicaid; and

Whereas, the Caring Program for Children is a project of the North Carolina Council of Churches, underwritten by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, and supported by individual contributions; and

Whereas, the Caring Program for Children provides coverage for well-child checkups, immunizations, physician office visits for sick children, emergency and accident care, x-rays and other diagnostic tests, outpatient surgery, and other preventive health measures; and

1           Whereas, to fulfill the public responsibility for improving the health of North  
2 Carolina children living in low-income families and to determine whether the concept of  
3 the Caring Program for Children will operate effectively through State contributions and  
4 participation, the General Assembly acknowledges that it is appropriate to establish a  
5 pilot program, funded by a combination of State and non-State contributions, with the  
6 goal of providing access to basic, preventive health care for uninsured children from  
7 low-income families; Now therefore,

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9           Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
10 Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, Division of Maternal-Child Health, the  
11 sum of \$50,000 for the 1990-91 fiscal year for a pilot program to be established to  
12 provide basic health insurance coverage for children in Gaston and Cumberland  
13 Counties whose families have incomes that are at or below the federal poverty  
14 guidelines, but who do not qualify for public health care programs such as Medicaid.

15           Sec. 2. Distribution of funds to the pilot program in Gaston and Cumberland  
16 Counties shall be contingent upon a non-State match for the State contribution. To  
17 provide data on the ability of counties to raise matching funds for such a program,  
18 Cumberland County shall provide, through non-State funds, a match of two dollars for  
19 every one State dollar and Gaston County shall provide, through non-State funds, a  
20 dollar-for-dollar match.

21           Sec. 3. The Division of Maternal-Child Health shall work in conjunction  
22 with the Department of Insurance and the Caring Program for Children to establish and  
23 administer this pilot program with the goal of insuring children in Gaston and  
24 Cumberland Counties who live in low-income families and are otherwise unable to  
25 obtain access to basic, preventive health care.

26           Sec. 4. This act shall become effective July 1, 1990.