

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1993**

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HOUSE BILL 1457

Short Title: Health Care Access Grants.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Edwards, C. Wilson; Arnold, Balmer, Barbee, Berry, J. Brown, Ellis, Grady, Hayes, Ives, J. Preston, Tallent, and G. Thompson.

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Referred to: Appropriations.

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May 17, 1993

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1  
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
3 ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO EXPAND  
4 ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE AND PRIMARY CARE PROVIDED BY LOCAL  
5 HEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND NONPROFIT COMMUNITY HEALTH  
6 CENTERS.

7       Whereas, over one million two hundred thousand North Carolinians either  
8 have no health care insurance coverage or are underinsured for health care; and

9       Whereas, providing access to preventive health care is an effective and  
10 efficient means of reducing long-range health care costs to the individual and to the  
11 State; and

12       Whereas, services of local health departments and nonprofit community  
13 health centers have long focused on preventive care, and more recently, in response to  
14 the health care insurance crisis, these agencies have also been providing primary care to  
15 uninsured persons; and

16       Whereas, State support of local health departments has not kept pace with  
17 demands for services; and

18       Whereas, in many rural communities, the local health department is the only  
19 source of affordable primary and preventive care for uninsured and underinsured  
20 persons; and

21       Whereas, expanding the availability of preventive and primary care services  
22 in local health departments and nonprofit community health centers located in rural  
23 areas would provide uninsured and underinsured North Carolinians in those areas with

1 access to preventive and primary care services during the period when the State and  
2 federal government are attempting to address the access to health care crisis; Now,  
3 therefore,

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 Section 1. (a) There is established in the Department of Environment, Health,  
6 and Natural Resources the Access to Preventive and Primary Care Grant Program. The  
7 purpose of the Program is to expand access of eligible persons to preventive and  
8 primary health care services provided through local health departments and nonprofit  
9 community health centers. The Program will be a pilot program implemented in 10 rural  
10 counties that apply for grant funding. The Program will be subject to renewal and  
11 expansion based upon Program outcomes and available resources. The Program shall  
12 address the following:

13 (1) During the first two years of implementation, 10 rural counties will be  
14 selected by the Department to receive grants. The maximum amount  
15 that may be awarded to one county during the first two years is five  
16 million eight hundred one thousand six hundred dollars (\$5,801,600).  
17 Counties will be selected for participation from county applications  
18 and will be based upon:

- 19 a. Demonstrated need;
- 20 b. Feasibility of implementation, including easy access by eligible  
21 recipients in terms of transportation and access to services in  
22 evenings and on weekends;
- 23 c. Evidence of provider collaboration, especially the use of mid-  
24 level providers for primary care services; and
- 25 d. Demonstrated commitment to preventive health services in the  
26 community.

27 (2) Counties selected will provide primary and preventive services  
28 delivered at local health departments and nonprofit community health  
29 centers by licensed physicians, physician assistants, nurse  
30 practitioners, and other mid-level providers approved by the  
31 Department.

32 (3) Services reimbursable from Grant funds shall include:

- 33 a. Office visits;
- 34 b. Limited lab and radiology services;
- 35 c. Periodic physical examinations;
- 36 d. Prenatal and maternity care;
- 37 e. Well baby visits;
- 38 f. Childhood immunizations;
- 39 g. Mammograms and pap smears;
- 40 h. Cholesterol screening;
- 41 i. Colon screening;
- 42 j. Adult vaccinations; and
- 43 k. Dental health care.

- 1 (4) Eligibility for services under the Program will be based upon the  
2 financial resources of the individual or family being served. Primary  
3 and preventive care services will be provided to individuals and  
4 families whose total annual incomes do not exceed one hundred  
5 percent (100%) of the federal poverty guidelines. Primary care  
6 services will be subject to a patient copayment that shall be determined  
7 on a sliding fee scale for each encounter. Preventive care services  
8 shall have no copayment requirement. Services to individuals and  
9 families whose total annual incomes exceed one hundred percent  
10 (100%) of poverty will be subject to a sliding fee scale for the services.  
11 Prescription drugs shall be provided without copayment, and shall be  
12 dispensed by Medicaid pharmacies pursuant to the Medicaid fee  
13 schedule paid to the pharmacy.
- 14 (5) Grant recipients will be required to demonstrate that patients requiring  
15 services beyond those covered under the Program will be served, to the  
16 extent possible, within the county. These services include, but are not  
17 limited to, hospital care and laboratory and other diagnostic services  
18 not available under the Program.

19 Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
20 Environment, Health, and Natural Resources the sum of twenty-four million eight  
21 hundred sixty-four thousand dollars (\$24,864,000) for the 1993-94 fiscal year and the  
22 sum of thirty-three million one hundred fifty-two thousand dollars (\$33,152,000) for the  
23 1994-95 fiscal year for implementation of the Access to Preventive and Primary Care  
24 Grant Program established under Section 1 of this act.

25 Sec. 3. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
26 Environment, Health, and Natural Resources the sum of five million dollars  
27 (\$5,000,000) for the 1993-94 fiscal year and the sum of five million dollars  
28 (\$5,000,000) for the 1994-95 fiscal year for allocation to county health departments that  
29 apply to the Department for matching funds under this section. Funds allocated under  
30 this section shall be used to enable local health departments to expand their hours of  
31 service to the community by not less than 12 additional hours of operation per week.  
32 The additional hours shall be used exclusively to provide some or all of the following  
33 preventive health services:

- 34 (1) Prenatal and maternity care;  
35 (2) Well baby visits;  
36 (3) Childhood immunizations;  
37 (4) Mammograms and pap smears;  
38 (5) Cholesterol screening;  
39 (6) Colon screening;  
40 (7) Adult vaccinations; and  
41 (8) Dental health care.

42 Funds allocated under this section shall be matched by counties at the rate of one dollar  
43 (\$1.00) of county funds for every three dollars (\$3.00) of State funds. Funds allocated

1 under this section shall be used to supplement and not supplant federal, State, and local  
2 funds appropriated for local health departments.

3           Sec. 4. The Department shall report to the General Assembly on or before  
4 January 1, 1995, on the use of funds appropriated under Sections 2 and 3 of this act.  
5 The report shall include:

- 6           (1) Number of counties that applied for grant and matching funds;
- 7           (2) Number of counties that qualified for funds but did not receive them  
8           because funds were limited;
- 9           (3) Services to be provided in each county receiving funds, including  
10           numbers of persons expected to be served;
- 11           (4) Recommendations regarding continuation and expansion of the grant  
12           and matching funds programs, including appropriation amounts  
13           necessary to continue and expand the programs; and
- 14           (5) Recommendations on the feasibility of requiring private health  
15           coverage to reimburse local health departments and community health  
16           centers for services provided under Sections 1 and 2 of this act.

17           Sec. 5. This act becomes effective July 1, 1993.