

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE DRH70723-LN-300 (5/12)

Short Title: Independent Study/Hepatitis C. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Earle.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STUDY COMMISSION ON HEPATITIS C, AND
TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Commission established. – There is established the Study
Commission on Hepatitis C.

SECTION 1.(b) Membership. – The Commission shall consist of 13
members, as follows:

- (1) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint five members, three of whom shall be members of the Senate, one of whom shall be an individual infected with hepatitis C, and one of whom shall be a representative of a North Carolina nonprofit organization working on hepatitis C issues.
- (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members, three of whom shall be members of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a hepatologist, and one of whom shall have expertise in hepatitis C/HIV coinfection, as recommended by the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health.
- (3) The Director of the Division of Public Health and the Secretary of Corrections, or the Secretary's designee, shall be appointed ex officio. The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall designate a representative of the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services with expertise in substance abuse issues.

SECTION 1.(c) Duties. – The Commission shall study the following:

- 1 (1) Historical and current information about the scope and nature of the
2 spread of hepatitis in North Carolina.
- 3 (2) Statewide and local practices and efforts by both the public and private
4 sectors regarding the prevention, testing, diagnosis, and treatment of
5 hepatitis C.
- 6 (3) Education levels of patients, health care providers, policymakers, and
7 the general public about hepatitis C, including the availability of
8 hepatitis C counseling, screening, education, treatment, harm
9 reduction, and prevention efforts.
- 10 (4) Awareness among persons at high risk for hepatitis C as well as police
11 officers, firefighters, persons employed by correctional facilities,
12 emergency response personnel, health care professionals, persons
13 employed in primary care settings or health care facilities, and other
14 persons who come into contact with high-risk groups.
- 15 (5) Information about coinfection with hepatitis C and HIV and the
16 implications of coinfection for HIV/AIDS treatment.
- 17 (6) Infection rates and screening and treatment issues in high-risk
18 populations, including veterans, Correction Department inmates, and
19 substance abusers.
- 20 (7) Existing hepatitis C support services in the community and the need
21 for improving the quality and accessibility of these services.

22 **SECTION 1.(d)** Reports. – The Commission shall submit a final written
23 report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly not later than the
24 convening of the 2007 General Assembly, Regular Session 2008. The Commission may
25 submit a progress report to the 2007 General Assembly upon its convening. The reports
26 shall also include legislative proposals necessary to implement the Commission's
27 recommendations and an analysis of the fiscal impact of each recommendation. The
28 Commission shall terminate upon the earlier of the filing of its final report or upon the
29 convening of the 2009 General Assembly.

30 **SECTION 1.(e)** Expenses of members. – Members of the Commission shall
31 be paid per diem, subsistence, and travel expenses, as follows:

- 32 (1) Commission members who are members of the General Assembly
33 shall be paid in accordance with G.S. 120-3.1.
- 34 (2) Commission members who are officials or employees of the State or
35 local government agencies shall be paid in accordance with
36 G.S. 138-6.
- 37 (3) All other Commission members shall be paid in accordance with
38 G.S. 138-5.

39 **SECTION 1.(f)** Cochairs; meetings. – The Speaker of the House of
40 Representatives shall appoint a cochair, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate
41 shall appoint a cochair for the Commission from their respective appointees. The
42 Commission shall meet upon the call of the chairs. A majority of the Commission
43 members shall constitute a quorum. The Commission may meet during a regular or
44 special session of the General Assembly, subject to the approval of the President Pro

1 Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The
2 Legislative Services Commission may provide meeting space to the Commission in the
3 State Legislative Building or in the Legislative Office Building.

4 **SECTION 1.(g)** Staff. – With the prior approval of the Legislative Services
5 Commission, the Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional staff to assist in
6 the work of the Commission.

7 **SECTION 1.(h)** Cooperation by government agencies. – The Commission
8 may call upon any department, agency, institution, or officer of the State or any political
9 subdivision of the State for facilities, data, or other assistance. All State departments and
10 agencies, local governments, and their subdivisions shall cooperate with the
11 Commission and, upon request, shall furnish the Commission and its staff any
12 information in their possession or available to them.

13 **SECTION 2.** From funds appropriated to the General Assembly, the
14 Legislative Services Commission shall allocate funds for the expenses of the
15 Commission established by this act.

16 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2006.