

PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 905**HOUSE BILL NO. 3459****By Representatives Armstrong, Miller, Ulysses Jones, Hardaway**

Substituted for: Senate Bill No. 3245

By Senators Tate, Kyle, Ford

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3, Chapter 15, Part 4, relative to the health equity commission.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-15-401, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(a) There is hereby created, within the legislative department, the health equity commission. The commission shall consist of twelve (12) members. Three (3) senators shall be appointed by the speaker of the senate, at least one (1) of whom shall be appointed from the membership of each of the following standing committees of the senate: finance, ways and means; general welfare, health and human resources; and commerce, labor and agriculture. Three (3) citizen members, who are knowledgeable on matters relating to health equity, shall be appointed by the speaker of the senate. One (1) such citizen member shall reside in each of the state's three (3) grand divisions. Three (3) representatives shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, at least one (1) of whom shall be appointed from the membership of each of the following standing committees of the house: finance, ways and means; general welfare; and commerce. Three (3) citizen members, who are knowledgeable on matters relating to health equity, shall be appointed by the speaker of the house. During the organizational session of each general assembly, the respective speakers shall reappoint or appoint legislative as well as citizen members to service on the health equity commission. Any vacancies occurring on the commission, between organizational sessions, shall be filled by the respective speakers in accordance with requirements of this subsection.

(b) The commission shall meet at least quarterly and at the call of the chair. Legislative members of the commission shall be entitled to reimbursement for their expenses in attending meetings of the commission or any subcommittee thereof at the same rates and in the same manner as when attending the general assembly. Citizen members of the commission shall receive no salary but shall be eligible to receive reimbursement for actual and necessary travel expenses incurred while performing commission business. Such reimbursement shall be paid in accordance with the comprehensive travel regulations promulgated by the commissioner of finance and administration and approved by the attorney general and reporter.

(c) The commission shall elect from its membership a chair, a vice chair and such other officers as it deems necessary.

(d) Each citizen member of the commission shall serve a term of one complete two year general assembly. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until the expiration of the term to which they were appointed and their successors are appointed. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-15-402(3), is amended by deleting the subdivision in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(3) Conduct such meetings and public hearings in Nashville and across the state as shall be necessary to increase public awareness of the social determinants of health and the elimination of health inequalities;

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-15-403, is amended by deleting the language "annually" and by substituting instead the language "per complete legislative session".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-15-404, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(a) It is the duty of the health equity care commission to:

(1) Review current state policies, health promotions and interventions designed to address inequalities in health as reflected in Tennessee statutes, regulations, programs, services and budgetary priorities;

(2) Study the social determinants of health or the root causes of the inequalities that jeopardize the health of Tennessee's minority and vulnerable communities, including, but not limited to, such persistent problems as teen pregnancy, infant mortality, chronic diseases, infectious diseases, preventable disorders, access to quality and affordable health care, cultural incompetence, and poverty;

(3) Define and establish the components, guidelines and objectives of a comprehensive state policy to eliminate health disparities and provide advice to the commissioner of finance and administration concerning the state health plan developed pursuant to § 68-11-1625;

(4) Identify any Tennessee laws, regulations, programs, services and budgetary priorities which conflict with the components, guidelines and objectives of such comprehensive policy;

(5) Search for any interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies and inefficiencies in the implementation or attainment of such comprehensive policy;

(6) Identify any new laws, regulations, programs, services and budgetary priorities which are needed to ensure and promote health equity for Tennessee's minority and vulnerable populations;

(7) Serve as an in-house informational resource for the general assembly on policy matters regarding emerging trends and social conditions that promote or inhibit the elimination of health disparities; and

(8) Perform such other activities as are reasonably related to the legislative intent of this part, including, but not necessarily limited to, improving public awareness of the state's health equity problems.

(b) The commissioner of health shall report at least once per year the performance of duties and responsibilities assigned by law to the Tennessee office of minority health.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: April 29, 2010


KENT WILLIAMS, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES


RON RAMSEY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

APPROVED this 11th day of May 2010


PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR