
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 713 Session of
2003

INTRODUCED BY TRAVAGLIO, BELFANTI, BISHOP, BROWNE, CAWLEY,
CURRY, DALEY, DeWEESE, GEIST, GEORGE, GRUCELA, HARHAI,
HORSEY, HUTCHINSON, JAMES, JOSEPHS, PALLONE, PISTELLA,
PRESTON, ROONEY, SAINATO, SATHER, SHANER, SOLOBAY, STABACK,
STURLA, TANGRETTI, E. Z. TAYLOR, THOMAS, WALKO AND
YOUNGBLOOD, MARCH 6, 2003

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
MARCH 6, 2003

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 27, 1905 (P.L.312, No.218), entitled
2 "An act creating a Department of Health, and defining its
3 powers and duties," further providing for State health
4 centers.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Section 8 of the act of April 27, 1905 (P.L.312,
8 No.218), entitled "An act creating a Department of Health and
9 defining its powers and duties," amended July 2, 1996 (P.L.518,
10 No.87), is amended to read:

11 Section 8. (a) It shall be the duty of the Department of
12 Health to protect the health of the people of the State, and to
13 determine and employ the most efficient and practical means for
14 the prevention and suppression of disease.

15 (b) The Secretary of Health shall cause examination to be
16 made of nuisances or questions affecting the security of life

1 and health in any locality, and for that purpose the secretary,
2 and any person authorized by him so to do, may, without fee or
3 hindrance, enter, examine and survey all grounds, vehicles,
4 apartments, buildings, and places within the State, and all
5 persons so authorized by him shall have the powers and authority
6 conferred by law upon constables.

7 [(c) (1) With the exception of the three State health
8 centers selected for the review program established in paragraph
9 (2), the department shall operate those public State health
10 centers and provide at a minimum those public health services in
11 effect as of July 1, 1995. Except as provided in paragraph (2),
12 the department shall not enter into contracts with any
13 additional private providers that would result in the
14 elimination of any State health center nor reduce the scope of
15 services currently provided nor reduce the number of centers.

16 (2) The department shall establish a review program to
17 determine the feasibility and effectiveness of entering into
18 contracts with local health care providers for the operation of
19 State health centers or the provision of equivalent services.
20 The program shall utilize the equivalent services provided by
21 three existing State health centers on the effective date of
22 this act, one of which shall be in an urban area of this
23 Commonwealth, one of which shall be in a suburban area of this
24 Commonwealth and one of which shall be in a rural area of this
25 Commonwealth, as determined by the department. The review
26 program shall begin on November 1, 1996, and shall continue for
27 a period of twelve months.

28 (3) The department shall identify the State health centers
29 under paragraph (2) and contract with one or more local health
30 care providers for the operation of the centers or for the

1 provision of equivalent services. The contract shall be
2 effective November 1, 1996, and shall be for a period of twelve
3 months. The contract shall provide for oversight by the
4 department of all services provided under the review program.

5 (4) On or before December 31, 1997, the department shall
6 submit a report to the General Assembly, which shall include,
7 but not be limited to, the following:

8 (i) A review and analysis of the three health care centers
9 or of the provision of equivalent services in the review
10 program, including patient utilization and services provided.

11 (ii) An analysis of the performance of each local health
12 care provider, including patient satisfaction with the provision
13 of services.

14 (iii) A review of other delivery systems for health services
15 in the community, both public and private.

16 (iv) A comparison of the cost and effectiveness of the
17 operation of each of the three health care centers by the
18 Commonwealth with the cost of the provision of equivalent
19 services by local health care providers.

20 (v) Recommendations regarding continuation of the provision
21 of the services previously provided by the three health care
22 centers included in the study program by local health care
23 providers.

24 (vi) Recommendations regarding the public and private
25 operation of all remaining health care centers or the provision
26 of equivalent services in this Commonwealth.]

27 (b.1) WHEREAS, The Department of Health has responsibility
28 to protect the health of the citizens of the Commonwealth of
29 Pennsylvania; and

30 WHEREAS, Recent events show that terrorism may pose a threat

1 to the public safety and welfare of citizens; and

2 WHEREAS, The use of anthrax as a weapon of terrorism infected
3 the mail system in areas of the United States and caused the
4 deaths of individuals in Florida, New York and Connecticut; and

5 WHEREAS, The deaths raised concerns throughout the
6 Commonwealth regarding the proper procedures that residents need
7 to follow to protect themselves; and

8 WHEREAS, Residents in every county in this Commonwealth
9 require assistance in the event of terrorism attacks, while many
10 also need basic health care services such as immunizations,
11 sexually transmitted disease testing, HIV/AIDS testing and
12 counseling and tuberculosis testing; and

13 WHEREAS, Health care centers throughout this Commonwealth had
14 provided efficient and effective services and information
15 regarding health and other threats in order to assist residents
16 with their concerns and needed services; and

17 WHEREAS, Reestablishing health care centers in counties
18 throughout this Commonwealth would ensure that residents can
19 immediately and easily access health care information and
20 services.

21 (c) The department shall establish public State health
22 centers in the county seats of each county in this Commonwealth
23 to ensure that residents may receive basic health care services
24 provided by those State health centers in effect as of July 1,
25 1995, including, but not limited to, immunizations, sexually
26 transmitted disease testing and counseling, tuberculosis
27 screening, and other services for the prevention and suppression
28 of disease and to assist local public officials in providing
29 information and coordinating the response and services regarding
30 incidents or concerns with bioterrorism.

1 (d) The department shall maintain and operate a State Public
2 Health Laboratory that shall assure the availability of reliable
3 clinical laboratory services and laboratory-based information
4 that are needed by clinicians and other health providers for
5 proper diagnosis and treatment, prevention of disease and
6 promotion of the health of the citizens of this Commonwealth.
7 The State Public Health Laboratory shall arrange for and perform
8 clinical tests to identify diseases and provide epidemiological
9 and surveillance support. The State Public Health Laboratory
10 shall not contract with outside laboratories to perform testing
11 in rabies, measles, rubella, Lyme disease, influenza and
12 tuberculosis identification. The State Public Health Laboratory
13 shall be administered and maintained in a manner in effect as of
14 July 1, 1995.

15 (e) The department shall apportion this Commonwealth into
16 dental health districts administered by a public health dentist
17 within the department, who shall implement dental health
18 policies and programs for the various counties and political
19 subdivisions within this Commonwealth.

20 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.