

By: Senator(s) Bean, Simmons, Posey,  
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(24th), Carlton, Woodfield, Jackson, Thames

To: Public Health and  
Welfare;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2500

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER  
2 GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE SERVICE GRANTS TO MISSISSIPPI QUALIFIED  
3 HEALTH CENTERS; TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH PROGRAM SHALL BE ADMINISTERED  
4 BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; TO PRESCRIBE THE PROCEDURE TO  
5 APPLY FOR SERVICE GRANTS; TO PROVIDE THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH SUCH  
6 GRANTS MAY BE USED; TO ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY PANEL TO REVIEW AND  
7 MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE AWARDING OF SERVICE GRANTS; TO CREATE  
8 A SPECIAL FUND TO BE KNOWN AS THE MISSISSIPPI QUALIFIED HEALTH  
9 CENTER GRANT PROGRAM INTO WHICH ALL MONEY RECEIVED FROM  
10 LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION PURSUANT TO THIS ACT SHALL BE DEPOSITED;  
11 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

13 SECTION 1. For purposes of this act:

14 (a) "Mississippi qualified health center" means a  
15 public or nonprofit entity which provides comprehensive primary  
16 care services that:

17 (i) Has a community board of directors, the  
18 majority of whom are users of such centers;

19 (ii) Accepts all patients that present themselves  
20 despite their ability to pay and uses a sliding-fee-schedule for  
21 payments; and

22 (iii) Serves a designated medically underserved  
23 area or population, as provided in Section 330 of the Public  
24 Health Service Act.

25 (b) "Uninsured or medically indigent patient" means a  
26 patient receiving services from a Mississippi qualified health  
27 center who is not eligible for Medicaid, Medicare or any other  
28 type of governmental reimbursement for health care costs or  
29 receiving third-party payments via an employer.

30 (c) "SDOH" means the Mississippi State Department of

31 Health.

32 (d) "Primary care" means the basic entry level of  
33 health care provided by health care practitioners or non-physician  
34 health care practitioners, which is generally provided in an  
35 outpatient setting.

36 (e) "Medically underserved area or population" means an  
37 area designated by the Secretary of the United States Department  
38 of Health and Human Services as an area with a shortage of  
39 professionals, health services or a population group designated by  
40 the secretary as having a shortage of such services.

41 (f) "Service grant" means a grant by the SDOH to a  
42 Mississippi qualified health center in accordance with this act.

43 (g) "Program" means the Mississippi Qualified Health  
44 Center Grant Program established in this act.

45 SECTION 2. The Mississippi Qualified Health Center Grant  
46 Program is hereby established, under the direction and  
47 administration of the SDOH, for the purpose of making service  
48 grants to Mississippi qualified health centers for their use in  
49 providing care to uninsured or medically indigent patients in  
50 Mississippi. The Mississippi Qualified Health Center Grant  
51 Program shall be established with such state funds as may be  
52 appropriated by the Legislature.

53 SECTION 3. (1) Any Mississippi qualified health center  
54 desiring to participate in the program shall make application for  
55 a grant to the SDOH in a form satisfactory to the SDOH. The SDOH  
56 shall receive grant proposals from Mississippi qualified health  
57 centers. All proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the  
58 provisions of grant procedures, criteria and standards developed  
59 and made public by the SDOH.

60 (2) The SDOH shall use the funds provided by this act to  
61 make grants during the next five (5) years to Mississippi  
62 qualified health centers upon proposals made pursuant to  
63 subsection (1) of this section. Grants that are awarded to

64 Mississippi qualified health centers shall only be used by such  
65 centers to:

66 (a) Increase access to preventative and primary care  
67 services by uninsured or medically indigent patients that are  
68 served by such centers; and

69 (b) Create new services or augment existing services  
70 provided to uninsured or medically indigent patients, including,  
71 but not limited to, primary care medical and preventive services,  
72 dental services, optometric services, in-house laboratory  
73 services, diagnostic services, pharmacy services, nutritional  
74 services and social services.

75 (3) Grants received by Mississippi qualified health centers  
76 pursuant to this act shall not be used:

77 (a) To supplant federal funds traditionally received by  
78 such centers, but shall be used to supplement them;

79 (b) For land or real estate investments;

80 (c) To finance or satisfy any existing debt; or

81 (d) Unless the health center specifically complies with  
82 a definition of a Mississippi qualified health center contained in  
83 Section 1 of this act.

84 (4) The SDOH shall develop regulations, procedures and  
85 application forms to govern how grants will be awarded, shall  
86 develop a plan to ensure that grants are equitably distributed  
87 among all Mississippi qualified health centers, and shall develop  
88 an audit process to assure that grant monies are used to provide  
89 and expend care to the uninsured and medially indigent.

90 (5) The SDOH shall establish a fund for the purpose of  
91 providing service grants to Mississippi qualified health centers  
92 in accordance with this act and the following terms and  
93 conditions:

94 (a) The total amount of grants issued pursuant to this  
95 act shall be Four Million Dollars (\$4,000,000.00) per state fiscal  
96 year.

97           (b) No Mississippi qualified health center shall  
98 receive assistance under this program in excess of Two Hundred  
99 Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) per calendar year.

100           (c) Each Mississippi qualified health center receiving  
101 a service grant shall provide a yearly report to the SDOH which  
102 details the number of additional uninsured and medically indigent  
103 patients that are cared for and the types of services that are  
104 provided.

105           (6) The SDOH shall establish an advisory council to review  
106 and make recommendations to the SDOH on the awarding of any grants  
107 to Mississippi qualified health centers. Such recommendations by  
108 the advisory council shall not be binding upon the SDOH, but when  
109 a recommendation by the advisory council is not followed by the  
110 SDOH, the SDOH shall place in its minutes reasons for not  
111 accepting the advisory council's recommendation, and provide for  
112 an appeals process. All approved grants shall be awarded within  
113 thirty (30) days of approval by the SDOH.

114           (7) The composition of the advisory council shall be the  
115 following:

116           (a) Two (2) employees of the SDOH, one (1) of whom must  
117 have experience in reviewing and writing grant proposals;

118           (b) Two (2) executive employees of Mississippi  
119 qualified health centers, one (1) of whom must be a chief  
120 financial officer;

121           (c) Two (2) health care providers who are affiliated  
122 with a Mississippi qualified health center; and

123           (d) One (1) health care provider who is not affiliated  
124 with a Mississippi qualified health center nor the SDOH but has  
125 training and experience in primary care.

126           (8) The SDOH may use a portion of any grant monies received  
127 under this act to administer the program and to pay reasonable  
128 expenses incurred by the advisory council; provided, however, in  
129 no case shall more than one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) or Sixty

130 Thousand Dollars (\$60,000.00) annually, whichever is less, be used  
131 to absorb program expenses.

132 (9) No assistance shall be provided to a Mississippi  
133 qualified health center under this act unless the Mississippi  
134 qualified health center certifies to the SDOH, that it will not  
135 discriminate against any employee or against any applicant for  
136 employment because of race, religion, color, national origin, sex  
137 or age.

138 SECTION 4. There is hereby created a special fund in the  
139 State Treasury to be known as the Mississippi Qualified Health  
140 Center Grant Program out of which grants and expenditures  
141 authorized in connection with the program shall be disbursed. All  
142 monies received by legislative appropriation to carry out the  
143 purposes of this act shall be deposited into the Mississippi  
144 Qualified Health Center Grant Program.

145 SECTION 5. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
146 and after July 1, 1999.