HOUSE BILL NO. 759  
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO CREATE THE TASK FORCE ON HEART DISEASE AND STROKE PREVENTION; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE FOR REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE TASK FORCE; TO ASSIGN THE TASK FORCE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY, AND PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL DESIGNATE STAFF TO ASSIST THE TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE; TO PRESCRIBE THE POWERS OF THE TASK FORCE; TO REQUIRE THE TASK FORCE TO SUBMIT REGULAR REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) There is created the Task Force on Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, which will be responsible for making available state-of-the-art information on heart disease and stroke education, prevention and treatment to health care providers in Mississippi. The task force will serve as a consensus group designed to coordinate efforts in heart disease and stroke education, prevention and treatment.

(2) The task force will consist of eighteen (18) members. Membership of the task force will include one (1) representative from each of the following agencies, organizations or entities, as designated by each respective agency, organization or entity:

(a) State Department of Health;
(b) State Department of Education;
(c) Division of Medicaid, Office of the Governor;
(d) State Department of Health, Division of Emergency Medical Services;
(e) American Heart Association (Southeast Affiliate - Mississippi);
(f) Mississippi State Medical Association;
(g) Mississippi Nurses Association;
(h) Mississippi Hospital Association;
(i) Mississippi Primary Health Care Association;
(j) Mississippi Stroke Education Consortium;
(k) Mississippi Chronic Illness Coalition;
(l) Mississippi Alliance for School Health;
(m) Information and Quality Health Care;
(n) Mississippi Association of Health System Pharmacists; and
(o) Health Research and Educational Foundation, Inc.

(3) In addition to the members designated in subsection (2), membership of the task force will consist of the following persons:

(a) One (1) member of the Mississippi House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
(b) One (1) member of the Mississippi Senate, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and
(c) One (1) person appointed by the Governor.

(4) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a chairman and other necessary officers from among its membership. The chairman and other officers shall be elected annually by the task force. The task force shall adopt bylaws and rules for its efficient operation. The task force may establish committees that will be responsible for conducting specific task force programs or activities.

(5) The task force shall meet and conduct business at least quarterly. All meetings of the task force and any committees of the task force will be open to the public, with opportunities for public comment provided on a regular basis. Notice of all meetings shall be given as provided in the Open Meetings Act (Section 25-41-1 et seq.) and appropriate notice also shall be given to all persons so requesting of the date, time and place of
each meeting. Ten (10) members of the task force will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

(6) The task force is assigned to the State Department of Health for administrative purposes only, and the department shall designate staff to assist the task force. The task force will have a line item in the budget of the State Department of Health and will be financed through the department's annual appropriation.

(7) Members of the task force who are not legislators, state officials or state employees may be compensated at the per diem rate authorized by Section 25-3-69 and may be reimbursed in accordance with Section 25-3-41 for mileage and actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Legislative members of the task force will be paid from the contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the same manner as provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session. However, legislative members will not be paid per diem or expenses for attending meetings of the task force while the Legislature is in session. No task force member may incur per diem, travel or other expenses unless previously authorized by vote, at a meeting of the task force, which action must be recorded in the official minutes of the meeting. Nonlegislative members may be paid from any funds made available to the task force for that purpose.

SECTION 2. (1) The Task Force on Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention has the following duties:

(a) Undertake a statistical and qualitative examination of the incidence and causes of heart disease and stroke deaths and risks, including identification of subpopulations at highest risk for developing heart disease and stroke, and establish a profile of the social and economic burden of heart disease and stroke in Mississippi;

(b) Publicize the profile of the heart disease and stroke burden and its preventability in Mississippi;
(c) Identify priority strategies that are effective in preventing and controlling risks for heart disease and stroke, based on recommendations promulgated by the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association;

(d) Adopt and promote a statewide comprehensive heart disease and stroke prevention plan to the general public, state and local elected officials, various public and private organizations and associations, business and industries, agencies, potential funders and other community resources;

(e) Identify and facilitate specific commitments to help implement the plan from the entities listed in paragraph (d);

(f) Facilitate coordination of and communication among state and local agencies and organizations regarding current or future involvement in achieving the aims of the plan;

(g) Receive and consider reports and testimony from individuals, local health departments, community-based organizations, voluntary health organizations, and other public and private organizations statewide, to learn more about their contributions to heart disease and stroke prevention, and their ideas for improving heart disease and stroke prevention in Mississippi;

(h) Determine the burden that delayed or inappropriate heart disease and stroke treatment has on the quality of patients' lives and on their financial resources;

(i) Study the economic impact of early heart disease and stroke treatment, especially with regard to quality of care, reimbursement issues and rehabilitation;

(j) Determine what constitutes high quality treatment for heart disease and stroke, and adopt and disseminate guidelines for the treatment of heart disease and stroke patients throughout the state; and

(k) Complete a detailed and specific plan of action for the State of Mississippi, and begin implementing the plan.
The task force shall submit a preliminary report to the Legislature and the Governor within six (6) months of the first meeting; an interim report during the 2002 Regular Session of the Legislature; and a final report by December 1, 2002. The reports shall address the plans, actions and resources needed to achieve its accomplishment, and progress in achieving implementation of the plan to reduce the occurrence of and burden from heart disease and stroke in Mississippi. The reports shall include an accounting of funds expended and anticipated funding needs for full implementation of recommended plans and programs. The task force will continue to submit reports to the Legislature and the Governor every six (6) months, updating the progress of implementing the state plan.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.