HOUSE BILL NO. 1276

AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SHALL ESTABLISH THE WISEWOMAN PROGRAM AND THE WISEMAN PROGRAM, THE PURPOSES AND GOALS OF WHICH ARE TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCES OF CERTAIN CHRONIC DISEASES AMONG MISSISSIPPIANS THROUGH EDUCATION, PREVENTION AND EARLY SCREENING AND DETECTION; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT, IN IMPLEMENTING THOSE PROGRAMS, TO CONTRACT WITH PUBLIC OR PRIVATE CLINICS OR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEMONSTRATED SUCCESS IN REDUCING INCIDENCES OF THOSE CHRONIC DISEASES THROUGH EDUCATION, PREVENTION AND EARLY SCREENING AND DETECTION; TO DIRECT THE LEGISLATURE TO APPROPRIATE NOT LESS THAN A CERTAIN SUM ANNUALLY FROM THE HEALTH CARE EXPENDABLE FUND TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO BE EXPENDED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THOSE PROGRAMS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) The Legislature makes the following findings:

(a) Chronic diseases are among the most prevalent, costly and preventable of all health problems.

(b) Screening tests are currently available that can detect heart disease, breast cancer, cervical cancer, colorectal cancer, prostate cancer and other chronic diseases early, when they can be most effectively treated, managed or controlled.

(c) The risk factors for many chronic diseases can be addressed and reduced through education about those risk factors and the importance of actions that can be taken for prevention of chronic diseases.

(d) People should partner with their health care providers to have their risk factors assessed, monitored and managed in accordance with national guidelines, and should be educated about the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke and the importance of getting help quickly at the onset of those symptoms.
(e) Mississippi should have programs that are specifically designed to reduce the incidences of chronic diseases among our population.

(2) The State Department of Health shall establish the WISEWOMAN program and the WISEMAN program, the purposes and goals of which are to reduce the incidences of certain chronic diseases among Mississippians through education, prevention and early screening and detection. The focus of the WISEWOMAN program shall be heart disease, stroke, breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer in women, and the focus of the WISEMAN program shall be heart disease, stroke, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer and diabetes in men. At a minimum, the WISEWOMAN and WISEMAN programs shall:

(a) Provide for education about healthy behaviors and how to reduce the risk factors for those chronic diseases;

(b) Provide for screening and testing to detect those chronic diseases early when they can be effectively treated, managed or controlled; and

(c) Be directed toward those populations at greatest need and be based on a foundation of scientific evidence.

(3) In implementing the WISEWOMAN and WISEMAN programs, the department shall contract with public or private clinics or agencies that have demonstrated success in reducing incidences of those chronic diseases through education, prevention and early screening and detection.

(4) The Legislature shall appropriate not less than Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) annually from the Health Care Expendable Fund to the State Department of Health to be expended by the department exclusively for implementing the WISEWOMAN and WISEMAN programs.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2007.