

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL 746

Short Title: Advisory Panel on Cancer Research Recs. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Sawyer, Perry, and Johnson (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 18, 2020

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY PANEL ON
3 CANCER RESEARCH AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 130A-208 reads as rewritten:

6 "**§ 130A-208. Central cancer registry; powers and duties.**

7 A central cancer registry is established within the Department. The central cancer registry
8 shall ~~compile~~ have the following powers and duties:

- 9 (1) Compile, tabulate and preserve statistical, ~~clinical-clinical~~, and other reports
10 and records pursuant to this Part relating to the incidence, ~~treatment-treatment~~,
11 and cure of cancer received pursuant to this Part. The central cancer registry
12 shall provide cancer.
13 (2) Provide assistance and consultation for public health work.
14 (3) Serve as the lead agency for cancer cluster inquiries and investigations in
15 North Carolina, as provided in G.S. 130A-208.1."

16 **SECTION 2.** Part 1 of Article 7 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended
17 by adding new sections to read:

18 "**§ 130A-208.1. Lead agency for cancer cluster investigations.**

19 (a) As the lead agency for cancer cluster investigations in North Carolina, the central
20 cancer registry shall oversee the coordination of State-level efforts and activities related to cancer
21 cluster inquiries and investigations, including efforts and activities by the Occupational and
22 Environmental Epidemiology Branch and the Department of Environmental Quality, in a way
23 that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness.

24 (b) The Department shall maintain a Web page on its Internet Web site dedicated to
25 cancer cluster investigations, which shall include the identity of, and contact information for, the
26 cancer epidemiologist selected to serve as the single point of contact for State-level cancer cluster
27 activities pursuant to G.S. 130A-208.2(a)(2).

28 "**§ 130A-208.2. Cancer epidemiologist.**

29 (a) The central cancer registry shall employ and retain an epidemiologist with
30 knowledge, training, and experience in cancer epidemiology, including cancer cluster
31 investigations, whose primary responsibility shall be to coordinate and communicate State-level
32 cancer cluster activities. To fulfill this primary responsibility, the cancer epidemiologist shall
33 have the following duties and powers:

- 34 (1) Lead State-level cancer cluster inquiries and investigations in collaboration
35 with the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch and the
36 Department of Environmental Quality, as appropriate.



- 1 (2) Serve as the single designated point of contact for State-level cancer cluster
2 activities.
- 3 (3) Conduct routine cancer surveillance activities.
- 4 (4) Proactively monitor cancer rates statewide, including analyzing patterns of
5 cancer incidence over geographic areas and time.
- 6 (5) Lead in the development, ongoing review, and updating of the statewide
7 cancer cluster protocol established pursuant to G.S. 130A-208.3, with
8 assistance from the Advisory Committee.
- 9 (6) Developing and disseminating reports.

10 **"§ 130A-208.3. Enhanced statewide cancer cluster protocol.**

11 The central cancer registry, in collaboration with the Cancer Cluster Subcommittee created
12 by G.S. 130A-33.52, shall establish and periodically update an enhanced statewide cancer cluster
13 protocol for addressing suspected cancer clusters within the State. The protocol shall be based
14 on the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for public
15 health agencies to assess and respond to potential cancer clusters. At a minimum, the protocol
16 shall incorporate all of the following:

- 17 (1) Best practices for all phases of cancer cluster assessment, including (i)
18 surveillance for identifying new cancer cases and monitoring trends, (ii)
19 inquiries, and (iii) detection and investigation.
- 20 (2) State and local infrastructure needs.
- 21 (3) Innovative statistical methods, software tools, and analytic approaches for
22 analyzing cancer rates and detecting cancer clusters.
- 23 (4) A comprehensive plan for internal communication within the Department as
24 well as external communication with local health departments, the
25 community, the media, and other stakeholders."

26 **SECTION 3.** Part 4 of Article 1B of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is
27 amended by adding a new section to read:

28 **"§ 130A-33.52. Cancer Cluster Subcommittee.**

29 There is created the Cancer Cluster Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Cancer
30 Coordination and Control to collaborate with the Central Cancer Registry on State-level cancer
31 cluster activities. The Cancer Cluster Subcommittee shall meet at least quarterly with the cancer
32 epidemiologist described in G.S. 130A-208.2 to provide advice and assistance on (i) the
33 enhanced statewide cancer cluster protocol and (ii) any State-level cancer cluster activities being
34 conducted across the State. The subcommittee shall be comprised of eleven individuals with
35 expertise in cancer cluster investigations, who shall be appointed as follows:

- 36 (1) Two cancer epidemiologists, one each appointed by the President Pro
37 Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- 38 (2) Two environmental health scientists, one each appointed by the President Pro
39 Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
- 40 (3) One local health director from a rural area of the State, appointed by the
41 Governor.
- 42 (4) One local health director from an urban area of the State, appointed by the
43 Governor.
- 44 (5) One statistician appointed by the Governor.
- 45 (6) Two public members appointed by the Governor.
- 46 (7) The Director of the Central Cancer Registry or a designee of the Director.
- 47 (8) The Director of the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch
48 or a designee of the Director.
- 49 (9) The Secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality or a designee of
50 the Secretary."

1 **SECTION 4.(a)** Not later than October 1, 2020, and within available appropriations,
2 the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Central Cancer
3 Registry, shall develop and implement a one-year pilot project to establish a statewide
4 environmental public health tracking Web portal that allows North Carolina residents and others
5 to view aggregated environmental and health data by time, geography, cancer type, age, group,
6 year, and other factors determined by the Central Cancer Registry. The purpose of this pilot
7 project is to better inform the assessment and communication of cancer and environmental
8 patterns in North Carolina through a Web portal that is distinct from the Central Cancer Registry's
9 Internet Web site. The staff of the Central Cancer Registry and the Occupational and
10 Environmental Epidemiology Branch shall work collaboratively with the cancer epidemiologist
11 described in G.S. 130A-208.2 to develop and implement the statewide environmental public
12 health tracking Web portal authorized by this section.

13 **SECTION 4.(b)** The Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public
14 Health, Central Cancer Registry, shall provide a report on the results of the pilot project
15 authorized under subsection (a) of this section to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
16 Health and Human Services on or before December 1, 2021. The report shall include a detailed
17 estimate of the projected annual cost to the Department to maintain the Web portal on a
18 permanent basis.

19 **SECTION 4.(c)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

20 **SECTION 5.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
21 Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, the following amounts for the 2020-2021
22 fiscal year:

- 23 (1) The sum of ninety-seven thousand nine hundred eleven dollars (\$97,911) in
24 recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Cancer Epidemiologist
25 position within the Central Cancer Registry dedicated to cancer cluster
26 investigations.
- 27 (2) The sum of eighty-four thousand eight hundred ninety dollars (\$84,890) in
28 recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Public Health Educator II
29 position within the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch
30 dedicated to assisting the Department of Health and Human Services and local
31 health departments with communications during cancer cluster investigations
32 and as the results of these investigations are made available to local health
33 departments, the media, and the general public.
- 34 (3) The sum of one hundred seven thousand three hundred twenty dollars
35 (\$107,320) in recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Geographic
36 Information Systems (GIS) Analyst position within the Central Cancer
37 Registry dedicated to GIS activities in support of cancer cluster investigations
38 and geographic analysis of cancer patterns.
- 39 (4) The sum of one hundred twenty-eight thousand three hundred fourteen dollars
40 (\$128,314) in recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Business and
41 Technology Application Specialist (Website Developer) position within the
42 Central Cancer Registry dedicated to enhancing and supporting the State
43 Center for Health Statistics Web site to include data visualization tools for
44 identifying cancer rates by geographic regions.
- 45 (5) The sum of one hundred thirty-one thousand nine hundred seventy-six dollars
46 (\$131,976) in recurring funds to create two full-time equivalent Certified
47 Tumor Registrar positions within the Central Cancer Registry dedicated to
48 coordinating outreach, communication, and onboarding with physician
49 practices to improve cancer case identification across the State. These
50 positions shall be responsible for (i) designing and implementing an
51 onboarding and training program to support increased compliance with

1 State-mandated cancer case reporting requirements imposed on physician
2 practices, (ii) providing training and when necessary re-training on cancer
3 case reporting when necessary to physician practice staff, including case entry
4 into a web-based application developed by the CDC and maintained by the
5 Central Cancer Registry information technology staff, and (iii) monitoring
6 compliance with State-mandated cancer case reporting requirements.

7 (6) The sum of sixteen thousand sixty-five dollars (\$16,065) in recurring funds to
8 purchase geographic information system software for the Central Cancer
9 Registry, to purchase tracking software for the Occupational and
10 Environmental Epidemiology Branch, and to fund storage and maintenance
11 costs associated with both.

12 **SECTION 5.(b)** The funds appropriated in this section to create full-time equivalent
13 positions shall not be used to supplant any other source of funding for these positions.

14 **SECTION 5.(c)** This section becomes effective July 1, 2020.

15 **SECTION 6.** Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective October 1,
16 2020.