

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA

NINETY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 1231**

Introduced by Jensen, 20

Read first time January 18, 2006

Committee: Health and Human Services

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to health and human services; to create the  
2 Office of Minority Health; to provide powers and duties;  
3 to provide for satellite offices of minority health; to  
4 eliminate provisions relating to satellite offices; and  
5 to outright repeal section 71-1628.07, Revised Statutes  
6 Supplement, 2005.  
7 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. (1) The Office of Minority Health is created  
2 within the Department of Health and Human Services. The purposes of  
3 the office are to represent and advance the interests of people of  
4 color for the purpose of reducing the disparity that exists between  
5 the health status of racial and ethnic minorities and nonminorities  
6 in Nebraska and to facilitate and impact public health for racial  
7 and ethnic minorities across the state. The central issues to carry  
8 out such purposes are to improve access to health services for  
9 racial and ethnic minorities; improve data collection strategies;  
10 increase racial and ethnic minority representation in science and  
11 health professions; develop relevant and comprehensive research  
12 agenda; and expand community-based health promotion and disease  
13 prevention outreach efforts. The office shall work in cooperation  
14 with federal, state, tribal, and local efforts as these groups work  
15 together to improve the health status of the state's racial and  
16 ethnic minority populations. The office shall work to eliminate  
17 disparities through a strong partnership among traditional and  
18 nontraditional public health-related organizations.

19           (2) The office shall:

20           (a) Assess health care needs of ethnic and racial  
21 minorities and make recommendations to address these needs;

22           (b) Assist in the planning, development, and review of  
23 policies that affect racial and ethnic minority health;

24           (c) Initiate a process for acquiring new resources;

25           (d) Advocate service integration for racial and ethnic

1 minority services within the Nebraska Health and Human Services  
2 System;

3 (e) Advocate and promote awareness for improving the  
4 health status of racial and ethnic minorities, including activities  
5 at the state and community level, sponsoring a minority health  
6 conference, public health forums, and preparing reports;

7 (f) Assist in policy and program development, quality  
8 assurance, and implementation of strategies designed to impact the  
9 morbidity, mortality, and disability rates of racial and ethnic  
10 minorities, including increasing access to services, impacting  
11 program planning, increasing the supply of racial and ethnic health  
12 and human services professionals;

13 (g) Assist state agencies and communities by providing  
14 technical assistance and training in grant applications and  
15 planning efforts, cultural competency training, culturally  
16 competent staff;

17 (h) Promote collaboration within the health system of  
18 state and local departments, community-based agencies, and existing  
19 programs;

20 (i) Explore strategies and activities designed to make  
21 the system and structure more culturally competent, including  
22 activities to promote a cultural competent system, to integrate  
23 alternative and conventional medicine, and to provide cultural and  
24 linguistic appropriate services;

25 (j) Assist communities, agencies, and organizations to

1 identify racial and ethnic minority needs and the appropriate  
2 resources to address them, including the means to identify and  
3 apply for grants to enhance services to racial and ethnic  
4 minorities and facilitate coordination among programs, agencies,  
5 and organizations to promote culturally appropriate services in  
6 racial and ethnic minority communities; and

7 (k) Collect and evaluate data which can provide input  
8 in setting priorities and identifying funding areas to address  
9 problems, including needs assessments, reports, surveys, studies,  
10 health status indicators, programs, and grant reviews.

11 Sec. 2. (1) The Office of Minority Health of the  
12 Department of Health and Human Services shall establish a satellite  
13 office of minority health in each congressional district to  
14 coordinate and administer state policy relating to minority health.  
15 Under the direction of the office, the satellite offices shall  
16 coordinate with local and regional health agencies, other state  
17 agencies, and other organizations in efforts related to minority  
18 health activities; collect, evaluate, and develop minority health  
19 training materials; and provide technical assistance and support to  
20 minority grantees, community organizations, and projects working on  
21 minority health activities. Each office shall implement a minority  
22 health initiative in counties with a minority population of at  
23 least five percent of the total population of the county as  
24 determined by the most recent federal decennial census which shall  
25 target, but not be limited to, infant mortality, cardiovascular

1 disease, obesity, diabetes, and asthma.

2 (2) Each satellite office shall prepare an annual  
3 report regarding minority health initiatives implemented in the  
4 immediately preceding fiscal year. The report shall be submitted  
5 to the department by October 1. The department shall submit  
6 such reports to the Health and Human Services Committee of the  
7 Legislature by December 1.

8 Sec. 3. (1) The Minority Health Advisory Committee is  
9 created. The committee shall provide advice and guidance to the  
10 Office of Minority Health. The committee shall be comprised of  
11 twenty-one members who represent Nebraska's racial and ethnic  
12 minority, consumers, providers, advocates, and the geographic  
13 regions of the state. The Director of Health and Human Services  
14 shall appoint the members for initial terms of one to three years,  
15 and successors to the initial members shall serve for three-year  
16 terms. The committee shall meet on a quarterly basis or more  
17 frequently at the call of the director.

18 (2) The purposes of the committee are to:

19 (a) Give persistent and continuing attention to reducing  
20 the gap in health status between minorities and nonminorities;

21 (b) Ensure the development of policies, programs,  
22 quality assurance, and implementation strategies which are racially  
23 and ethnically designed to significantly impact the morbidity,  
24 mortality, and disability rates of minorities;

25 (c) Encourage collaboration within the public health

1 system of state and local public health departments and  
2 community-based agencies;

3 (d) Promote working with existing programs in order to  
4 make the Nebraska Health and Human Services System more culturally  
5 competent;

6 (e) Provide input in setting priority funding areas that  
7 will address problems identified through needs assessments and  
8 community input; and

9 (f) Ensure assistance to communities, agencies, and  
10 organizations in identifying minority needs and the appropriate  
11 resources to address them.

12 Sec. 4. The following section is outright repealed:  
13 Section 71-1628.07, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2005.