

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 628

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the designation of maternity care health professional shortage areas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 3, 2015

Mr. KIRK (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the designation of maternity care health professional shortage areas.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Access to
5 Maternity Care Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MATERNITY CARE HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORT-**
2 **AGE AREAS.**

3 Section 332 of the Public Health Service Act (42
4 U.S.C. 254e) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
5 lowing new subsection:

6 “(k)(1) The Secretary, acting through the Adminis-
7 trator of the Health Resources and Services Administra-
8 tion, shall designate maternity care health professional
9 shortage areas in the States and at least annually there-
10 after review and, as necessary, revise such designations.

11 “(2) In carrying out paragraph (1), and in applying
12 subsection (b) pursuant to paragraph (4), the Secretary
13 shall seek input from relevant provider organizations, in-
14 cluding medical societies, organizations representing med-
15 ical facilities, and other organizations with expertise in
16 maternity care.

17 “(3) In applying subsection (d), pursuant to para-
18 graph (4), the Secretary shall collect and publish in the
19 Federal Register data on health care professional shortage
20 areas based on professional category of maternal health
21 professionals providing full scope maternity health care by
22 provider type as well as geographic region. Such data shall
23 be presented in a manner to compare availability and need
24 of such professionals by such professional category and ge-
25 ographic region.

1 “(4) The provisions of subsections (b), (c), (d), (e),
2 (f), (g), (h), (i), and (j) (other than (j)(1)(B)) of this sec-
3 tion shall apply to the designation of a maternity care
4 health professional shortage area under this subsection in
5 a similar manner and extent as such provisions apply to
6 the designation of health professional shortage areas
7 under subsection (a), except—

8 “(A) in applying subsection (b)(3), the ref-
9 erence in such subsection to ‘physicians’ shall be
10 deemed to be a reference to physicians and other
11 health professionals as providing maternity care eli-
12 gible for loan repayment under this part who provide
13 full scope maternity care;

14 “(B) in applying subsection (d)—

15 “(i) the reference in paragraph (2) of such
16 subsection to ‘July 1 of 1991’ shall be deemed
17 to be a reference to ‘July 1 of 2016’; and

18 “(ii) the descriptive list required under
19 such paragraph, with respect to a maternity
20 care health professional shortage area des-
21 ignated under paragraph (1), shall include—

22 “(I) population groups in the area
23 that would benefit from full scope mater-
24 nity care health services; and

1 “(II) the providers and medical facili-
2 ties that provide such services to such
3 groups in such area; and

4 “(C) in applying such provisions of subsections
5 (b), (c), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), and (j), a reference to
6 an area, population group, or facility shall be
7 deemed to be a reference to an area or population
8 group described in paragraph (5).

9 “(5) For purposes of this subsection:

10 “(A) The term ‘maternity care health profes-
11 sional shortage area’ means—

12 “(i) an area in an urban or rural area
13 (which need not conform to the geographic
14 boundaries of a political subdivision and which
15 is a rational area for the delivery of health serv-
16 ices) which the Secretary determines has a
17 shortage of providers of full scope maternity
18 care health services;

19 “(ii) an area in an urban or rural area
20 (which need not conform to the geographic
21 boundaries of a political subdivision and which
22 is a rational area for the delivery of health serv-
23 ices) which the Secretary determines has a
24 shortage of hospital or birth center labor and
25 delivery units; or

1 “(iii) a population group which the Sec-
2 retary determines has such a shortage of mater-
3 nal providers or facilities.

4 “(B) The term ‘full scope maternity care health
5 services’ includes during labor care, birthing, pre-
6 natal care, and postpartum care.

7 “(C) The term ‘medical facility’ has the mean-
8 ing given such term in subsection (a)(2) and in-
9 cludes a freestanding birth center, as defined in sec-
10 tion 1905(l)(3)(B) of the Social Security Act.”.

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