

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2024 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Health Policy

SB 7018 — Health Care Innovation

by Health Policy Committee and Senator Harrell

The bill (Chapter 2024-16, L.O.F.) sets forth legislative intent related to health care innovation in this state and creates a framework to implement that intent. The intent is to harness the innovation and creativity of entrepreneurs and businesses, in collaboration with the state's health care system and stakeholders, to lead the discussion on innovations that will address challenges in the health care system and to transform the delivery and strengthen the quality of health care in Florida.

The bill creates the Health Care Innovation Council, a 15-member council within the Department of Health (DOH), to facilitate public meetings across the state to lead discussions with innovators, developers, and implementers of technologies, workforce pathways, service delivery models, or other solutions. Based on the public input and information gathered at public meetings, the bill requires the council to create best practice recommendations and focus areas for the advancement of the delivery of health care in Florida, with an emphasis on:

- Increasing efficiency in the delivery of health care;
- Reducing strain on the health care workforce;
- Increasing public access to health care;
- Improving patient outcomes;
- Reducing unnecessary hospital emergency department visits; and
- Reducing costs for patients and the state without reducing the quality of patient care.

The bill creates a revolving loan program within the DOH to provide low-interest loans to applicants to implement one or more innovative technologies, workforce pathways, or service delivery models in order to:

- Fill a demonstrated need;
- Obtain or upgrade necessary equipment, hardware, and materials;
- Adopt new technologies or systems; or
- A combination thereof to improve the quality and delivery of health care in measureable and sustainable ways that will lower costs and allow that value to be passed-on to health care consumer.

The bill directs the council to review loan applications and submit to the DOH a prioritized list of proposals recommended for funding. Under the bill, loan recipients will enter into agreements with the DOH for loans of up to 10-year terms for up to 50 percent of the proposal costs, or up to 80 percent of the costs for an applicant that is located in a rural or medically underserved area and is either a rural hospital or a nonprofit entity that accepts Medicaid patients.

The bill requires both the council and the DOH to publicly report certain information related to the activities required under the bill and requires the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (beginning October 1, 2029) and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (beginning October 1, 2030) to evaluate specified aspects of the

revolving loan program every five years. The bill requires both offices to include recommendations for consideration by the Legislature and that both offices must be given access to all data necessary to complete their evaluations, including any confidential data. The offices may collaborate on data collection and analysis under the bill.

The bill makes the following appropriations:

- For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, appropriates \$250,000 in nonrecurring General Revenue funds for the DOH to support the council.
- For Fiscal Year 2024-2025, appropriates \$1 million in recurring General Revenue funds for the DOH to support the council.
- For Fiscal Years 2024-2025 through 2034-2035:
 - Requires the Chief Financial Officer by August 1 each year to transfer \$50 million from the General Revenue Fund to the Grants and Donations Trust Fund in the DOH.
 - Appropriates \$50 million in nonrecurring funds from the Grants and Donations Trust Fund each year for the DOH to make loans under the revolving loan program. The DOH may use up to three percent of the funds for administrative costs to implement the revolving loan program.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect March 21, 2024.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 117-1