

By Senator Gibson

1-01118B-12

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to public health; creating the
3 expedited partner therapy pilot project in Duval and
4 Gadsden Counties; providing an exemption from
5 specified rules and statutory requirements for the
6 pilot program; providing for training of physicians
7 and patient education; requiring the pilot project to
8 be funded by the existing budget of the pilot project
9 area or by developing partnerships; providing for the
10 use of funds; providing an effective date.

11
12 WHEREAS, expedited partner therapy offers a cost-effective
13 treatment tool for breaking the cycle of chlamydia and gonorrhea
14 that infects thousands of women age 15 through 34 annually who
15 are thus at a higher risk for poor birth outcomes if they become
16 pregnant, and

17 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
18 recommends expedited partner therapy as a treatment option and
19 has developed specific guidelines for its use, and

20 WHEREAS, Gadsden and Duval Counties rank 1st and 3rd,
21 respectively, in the state in reported cases of sexually
22 transmitted infections, experiencing significant increases in
23 both chlamydia and gonorrhea over the last 5 years, particularly
24 among women of childbearing age, and

25 WHEREAS, the state's current approach to tracking and
26 treating partners has not been successful in reducing these
27 rates, and

28 WHEREAS, the proposed pilot project is projected to cost
29 \$70,000 annually and reach approximately 4,000 persons and their

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30 partners and offers a cost-effective strategy for testing
31 expedited partner therapy and evaluating its impact in two
32 counties that have significantly high incidences of sexually
33 transmitted infections and infant mortality, NOW, THEREFORE,

34
35 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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37 Section 1. Expedited partner therapy pilot project.—The
38 Department of Health shall develop and implement an expedited
39 partner therapy pilot project in Duval and Gadsden Counties to
40 address high rates of sexually transmitted infections. The pilot
41 project shall exempt providers in those counties from the
42 requirements of ss. 384.27 and 465.023(1)(h), Florida Statutes,
43 and Rule 64B8-9.014, Florida Administrative Code. Under the
44 proposed pilot project, a physician is authorized to provide a
45 single dose of medication provided by the county health
46 department to infected patients for use by their partners.
47 Expedited partner therapy is not mandated under the pilot
48 project but is offered as a treatment option. The pilot project
49 shall provide training to physicians on the guidelines for
50 expedited partner therapy developed by the Centers for Disease
51 Control and Prevention and adapt provider and patient education
52 material on expedited partner therapy developed by the state of
53 Texas, which recently approved expedited partner therapy as a
54 treatment option. The cost of the pilot project may be covered
55 by identifying resources within the existing budget of the pilot
56 project area or by developing partnerships. The funds shall be
57 used to purchase needed medication, provide educational material
58 for physicians and patients, and evaluate the progress of the

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59 pilot project.

60 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.