STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 50th Legislature (2005)

SENATE BILL 981 By: Gumm

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to poor persons; amending 56 O.S. 2001, Section 1010.1, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 136, O.S.L. 2004 (56 O.S. Supp. 2004, Section 1010.1), which relates to the Oklahoma Medicaid Program Reform Act of 2003; clarifying language; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 56 O.S. 2001, Section 1010.1, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 136, O.S.L. 2004 (56 O.S. Supp. 2004, Section 1010.1), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1010.1 A. Sections 1010.1 through 1010.7 of this title shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Medicaid Program Reform Act of 2003".

B. Recognizing that many Oklahomans do not have health care benefits or health care coverage, that many small businesses cannot afford to provide health care benefits to their employees, and that, under federal law, barriers exist to providing Medicaid benefits to the uninsured, the Oklahoma Legislature hereby establishes provisions to lower the number of uninsured, assist businesses in their ability to afford health care benefits and coverage for their employees, and eliminate barriers to providing health coverage to eligible enrollees under federal law.

C. The Oklahoma Health Care Authority shall provide coverage under the state Medicaid program to children under the age of eighteen (18) years whose family incomes do not exceed one hundred eighty-five percent (185%) of the federal poverty level.

D. 1. The Authority is hereby directed to apply for a waiver or waivers to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) that will accomplish the purposes outlined in subsection B of this section. The Authority is further directed to negotiate with CMS to include in such waiver authority provisions to:

a. increase access to health care for Oklahomans,

b. reform the Oklahoma Medicaid Program to promote personal responsibility for health care services and appropriate utilization of health care benefits through the use of public-private cost sharing,

c. enable small employers, and/or employed, uninsured adults with or without children to purchase employer-sponsored, state-approved private, or state-sponsored health care coverage through a state premium assistance payment plan, and

d. develop flexible health care benefit packages based upon patient need and cost.

2. The Authority may phase in any waiver or waivers it receives based upon available funding.

3. The Authority is hereby authorized to develop and implement a pilot premium assistance plan to assist small businesses and/or their eligible employees to purchase employer-sponsored insurance or "buy-in" to a state-sponsored benefit plan.

E. 1. There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund to be designated the "Health Employee and Economy Improvement Act (HEEIA) Revolving Fund".

2. The fund shall be a continuing fund~~,~~ not subject to fiscal year limitations~~, and~~. The fund shall consist of:

a. all monies received by the Authority pursuant to this section and otherwise specified or authorized by law,

b. monies received by the Authority due to federal financial participation pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act, and

c. interest attributable to investment of money in the fund.

3. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and shall be budgeted and expanded by the Authority to implement a premium assistance plan.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2005.

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