

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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SENATE BILL 862

Short Title: Cancer Research/Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Sawyer (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Appropriations/Base Budget

May 27, 2022

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY
3 PANEL ON CANCER RESEARCH AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THIS
4 PURPOSE.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 130A-208 reads as rewritten:

7 "**§ 130A-208. Central cancer registry; powers and duties.**

8 A central cancer registry is established within the Department. The central cancer registry
9 shall ~~compile~~, have the following powers and duties:

- 10 (1) Compile, tabulate and preserve statistical, ~~clinical-clinical~~, and other reports
11 and records pursuant to this Part relating to the incidence, ~~treatment-treatment~~,
12 and cure of cancer received pursuant to this Part. The central cancer registry
13 shall provide cancer.
14 (2) Provide assistance and consultation for public health work.
15 (3) Serve as the lead agency for cancer cluster inquiries and investigations in
16 North Carolina, as provided in G.S. 130A-208.5."

17 SECTION 2. Part 1 of Article 7 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended
18 by adding the following new sections to read:

19 "**§ 130A-208.5. Lead agency for cancer cluster investigations.**

20 As the lead agency for cancer cluster investigations in North Carolina, the central cancer
21 registry shall oversee the coordination of State-level efforts and activities related to cancer cluster
22 inquiries and investigations, including efforts and activities by the Occupational and
23 Environmental Epidemiology Branch and the Department of Environmental Quality, in a way
24 that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness.

25 "**§ 130A-208.6. Cancer epidemiologist.**

26 (a) The central cancer registry shall employ and retain an epidemiologist with
27 knowledge, training, and experience in cancer epidemiology, including cancer cluster
28 investigations, whose primary responsibility shall be to coordinate and communicate State-level
29 cancer cluster activities. To fulfill this primary responsibility, the cancer epidemiologist shall
30 have the following duties and powers:

- 31 (1) Lead State-level cancer cluster inquiries and investigations in collaboration
32 with the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch and the
33 Department of Environmental Quality, as appropriate.
34 (2) Serve as the single designated point of contact for State-level cancer cluster
35 activities.
36 (3) Conduct routine cancer surveillance activities.



- 1 (4) Proactively monitor cancer rates statewide, including analyzing patterns of
2 cancer incidence over geographic areas and time.
- 3 (5) Lead in the development, ongoing review, and updating of the statewide
4 cancer cluster protocol established pursuant to G.S. 130A-208.7, with
5 assistance from the Advisory Committee.
- 6 (6) Develop and disseminate reports.

7 **"§ 130A-208.7. Enhanced statewide cancer cluster protocol.**

8 The central cancer registry, in collaboration with the cancer epidemiologist described in
9 G.S. 130A-208.6, shall establish and periodically update an enhanced statewide cancer cluster
10 protocol for addressing suspected cancer clusters within the State. The protocol shall be based
11 on the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for public
12 health agencies to assess and respond to potential cancer clusters. At a minimum, the protocol
13 shall incorporate all of the following:

- 14 (1) Best practices for all phases of cancer cluster assessment, including (i)
15 surveillance for identifying new cancer cases and monitoring trends, (ii)
16 inquiries, and (iii) detection and investigation.
- 17 (2) State and local infrastructure needs.
- 18 (3) Innovative statistical methods, software tools, and analytic approaches for
19 analyzing cancer rates and detecting cancer clusters.
- 20 (4) A comprehensive plan for internal communication within the Department, as
21 well as external communication with local health departments, the
22 community, the media, and other stakeholders."

23 **SECTION 3.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
24 Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, the sum of three hundred fourteen
25 thousand seven hundred seventy-seven dollars (\$314,777) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023
26 fiscal year to be used as follows:

- 27 (1) \$97,911 in recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Cancer
28 Epidemiologist position within the central cancer registry dedicated to cancer
29 cluster investigations.
- 30 (2) \$84,890 in recurring funds to create one full-time equivalent Public Health
31 Educator II position within the Occupational and Environmental
32 Epidemiology Branch dedicated to assisting the Department of Health and
33 Human Services and local health departments with communications during
34 cancer cluster investigations and as the results of these investigations are made
35 available to local health departments, the media, and the general public.
- 36 (3) \$131,976 in recurring funds to create two full-time equivalent Certified Tumor
37 Registrar positions within the central cancer registry dedicated to coordinating
38 outreach, communication, and onboarding with physician practices to
39 improve cancer case identification across the State. These positions shall be
40 responsible for (i) designing and implementing an onboarding and training
41 program to support increased compliance with State-mandated cancer case
42 reporting requirements imposed on physician practices, (ii) providing training
43 and, when necessary, retraining on cancer case reporting to physician practice
44 staff, including case entry into a web-based application developed by the CDC
45 and maintained by the central cancer registry information technology staff,
46 and (iii) monitoring compliance with State-mandated cancer case reporting
47 requirements.

48 **SECTION 3.(b)** The funds appropriated in this section to create full-time equivalent
49 positions shall not be used to supplant any other source of funding for these positions.

50 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2022. The remainder of
51 this act becomes effective October 1, 2022.