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State of Minnesota  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-FIFTH  
SESSION

HOUSE FILE No. 1623

March 1, 2007

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services

March 13, 2007

Committee Recommendation and Adoption of Report:

To Pass and re-referred to the Committee on Finance

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to public health; establishing a pilot project to improve access to dental  
1.3 care for children; appropriating money.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTH CARE PILOT PROJECT.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. **Bright Smiles project established.** (a) The commissioner of health  
1.7 shall establish a pilot project to fund a Bright Smiles program designed to increase access  
1.8 to oral health care for low-income and immigrant children, ages birth to five years,  
1.9 and their families and to build the knowledge and ability of parents to care for the oral  
1.10 health of their children. Under this pilot project, a Bright Smiles program shall serve the  
1.11 medically underserved areas in Minneapolis, as determined by the commissioner of health.

1.12 (b) A grant shall be used to fund costs related to improving oral health outreach,  
1.13 education, screening, and access to care for families with children, ages birth to five years.

1.14 Subd. 2. **Project requirements.** Grant applicants shall submit to the commissioner  
1.15 a written plan that demonstrates the ability to provide the following:

1.16 (1) new programs or continued expansion of current access programs that have  
1.17 demonstrated success in providing dental services in underserved areas of Minneapolis;

1.18 (2) programs for screening children entering the Minneapolis public school system  
1.19 and facilitating access to care for their families;

1.20 (3) programs testing new models of care that are sensitive to cultural needs of the  
1.21 recipients;

1.22 (4) programs creating new educational campaigns that inform individuals of the  
1.23 importance of good oral health and the link between dental diseases, overall health status,  
1.24 and success in school; and

2.1 (5) programs testing new delivery models by creating partnerships between local  
2.2 early childhood and school-age education and community clinic dental providers.

2.3 Subd. 3. **Applications.** (a) Qualified applicants are partnerships among early  
2.4 childhood experts, Minneapolis public schools, and nonprofit clinics that are established  
2.5 to provide health services to low-income patients, provide preventive and dental care  
2.6 services, and utilize a sliding-scale fee or other method of providing charity care that  
2.7 ensures that no person is denied services because of inability to pay.

2.8 (b) Applicants shall submit to the commissioner an application and supporting  
2.9 documentation, in the form and manner specified by the commissioner. Applicants must  
2.10 be able to provide culturally appropriate outreach, screenings, and access to dental care  
2.11 for children, ages birth to five years, their parents, and pregnant women most at risk  
2.12 of poor oral health due to lack of access to dental care. Applicants must also meet the  
2.13 following criteria:

2.14 (1) have the potential to successfully increase access to families with children,  
2.15 ages birth to five years;

2.16 (2) incorporate quality program evaluation;

2.17 (3) maximize use of grant funds; and

2.18 (4) have experience in providing services to the target populations of this program.

2.19 Subd. 4. **Evaluation.** The commissioner shall evaluate the effectiveness of this  
2.20 pilot program on the oral health of children and their families and report to the house  
2.21 of representatives and senate committees with jurisdiction over public health policy  
2.22 and finance by January 1, 2009, with recommendations as to how to develop programs  
2.23 throughout Minnesota that provide education and access to oral health care for low-income  
2.24 and immigrant children.

2.25 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

2.26 (a) \$173,500 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of health for  
2.27 the 2008-2009 biennium to fund a grant for the Bright Smiles pilot project.

2.28 (b) \$100,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of health for  
2.29 the 2008-2009 biennium to fund a dental health coordinator position.