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Chapter No. 473
11/SS26/R594SG
JN /CC/LR

SENATE BILL NO. 2220

Originated in Senate _____ Secretary

SENATE BILL NO. 2220

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL GRANTS AND TO PROVIDE AN INFLUENZA VACCINATION SCHOOL PROGRAM IN MISSISSIPPI FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN 5 THROUGH 18 YEARS OF AGE AND TO PROVIDE CERTAIN STANDARDS FOR THE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. The State of Mississippi finds as follows:

(a) Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. The best way to help prevent seasonal influenza is by getting a vaccination each year.

(b) Every year in the United States, on average, more than two hundred thousand (200,000) people are hospitalized from influenza-related complications and about thirty-six thousand (36,000) people, mostly the elderly, die from influenza-related causes.

(c) The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends seasonal influenza vaccinations for all eligible persons in the United States, including eligible children aged six (6) months through eighteen (18) years of age.

(d) Children and young adults five (5) years to nineteen (19) years of age are three (3) to four (4) times more likely to be infected with influenza than adults.

(e) School-aged children are the population group most responsible for transmission of contagious respiratory viruses, including influenza.

(f) The elderly are the next most vulnerable population to severe illness from influenza due to weaker immune response to vaccination.

(g) School-located influenza vaccination programs may be an effective way to vaccinate children while reducing transmission and infection rates to the larger community and at the same time reducing rates of school absenteeism due to children being infected with influenza.

(h) Schools can be an effective infrastructure tool to improve pandemic planning by identifying known and effective pandemic vaccination centers.

(i) Although experience has demonstrated the feasibility and success of school-located influenza vaccination programs in vaccinating children, funding and logistical issues, particularly involving the delivery of vaccine to children with private insurance coverage, are issues with program sustainability.

(j) Given the significant fiscal challenges ahead for Mississippi, it is important for the Legislature to ensure that state agencies maximize their opportunity to obtain additional federal funds.

SECTION 2. Funding for School-Located Influenza Vaccination Programs.

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature that the State Department of Health apply for federal grants and appropriations under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), Public Law 111-148, to fund, build infrastructure, promote and expand school-located influenza vaccination programs to provide seasonal influenza vaccinations for school-aged children. The agency may seek grants and appropriations from any source.

(2) The State Department of Health shall make information regarding federal grant and appropriations opportunities under

PPACA available to local government agencies, local public health departments, school districts, and state and local nonprofit organizations via the agency's website.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2011.

PASSED BY THE SENATE
March 26, 2011

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 28, 2011

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR

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