

**MINUTES OF THE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, August 20, 2008 – 3:00 p.m. – Convene in State Office Building Auditorium, Recess and
Reconvene in Room C250, State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. D. Chris Butters, Senate Chair
Rep. Paul Ray, House Chair
Sen. Allen M. Christensen
Sen. Jon J. Greiner
Rep. John Dougall
Rep. Jack R. Draxler
Rep. Julie Fisher
Rep. Wayne A. Harper
Rep. David Litvack
Rep. Rosalind J. McGee
Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold
Rep. Phil Riesen

Members Absent:

Sen. Scott D. McCoy
Rep. Stephen E. Sandstrom

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Mr. Thomas R. Vaughn, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Joy L. Miller, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

The Committee convened at 3:15 p.m. in the State Office Building Auditorium to meet jointly with the Political Subdivisions Interim Committee to discuss local health department funding.

2. Local Health Department Funding

Chair Dennis Stowell introduced the discussion topic: "to improve local health department funding of emergency and day-to-day operations." He reported on previous discussions that resulted in three proposed solutions to consider: 1) a cigarette tax managed through the governor's office, 2) a dedicated mill levy, and 3) the creation of a state emergency fund that would also be available to county health departments. "Budget Funding Summary (2002-2008)" and a sample property tax notice were distributed and reviewed.

Mr. Gary Edwards, Executive Director, Salt Lake Valley Health Department, joined at the witness table by Mr. Lloyd Berentzen, Executive Director, Bear River Health Department, explained the current funding for local health departments in Utah. He expressed concern about the inequity between county and state funding for state mandated programs. He distributed "Local Health Department Program List" and explained the need for the programs. He reviewed those areas of public health that are not being addressed because of inadequate funding. Mr. Edwards suggested a need for a \$30 million influx of funding to local health departments. He reviewed the three proposals introduced by Sen. Stowell.

Mr. Doug Springmeyer, Assistant Attorney General, spoke about the concept of concurrence with state and federal mandates and the efforts of the state health department to realize equity for all the state's local health departments. He assured the Committee that both the monies being administered by the state and by the counties are being efficiently used.

Committee discussion followed.

Rep. Wimmer asked that an email be sent to committee members listing requirements the state has imposed on local health departments. The list could be used to consider repealing unnecessary requirements. Rep. Seelig requested a list of best practices. Rep. Harper requested a list of fees charged for services and indicated that it should be ensured that businesses are not paying separate fees to different agencies for the same services.

Mr. Mont Evans, Utah Restaurant Association, indicated that it would be helpful if local health departments could interact with restaurants in more structured, less arbitrary ways.

Mr. Adam Trupp, Utah Association of Counties, indicated that county commissioners have not taken a position on the three proposals to improve local health department funding outlined by Sen. Stowell.

Chair Stowell stated that chairs of the two committees will divide the proposed solutions between the two committees and place them on future agendas.

MOTION: Rep. Ray moved to recess the joint meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Recess and Reconvene in Room C250

The Committee recessed at 4:30 p.m. and reconvened in Room C250 at 4:45 p.m.

4. Obesity prevention

Dr. George Delavan, Division Director, Community and Family Health Services, Utah Department of Health (UDOH), distributed and reviewed "Community and Family Health Services." He gave an overview of efforts currently ongoing with regard to obesity prevention and discussed a federal grant recently received by the department to address the effort.

Ms. Sarah Rigby, Coordinator, Gold Medal Schools Program, Department of Health, distributed and discussed "A Tradition of Health in All Utah Schools." She reviewed a sample of the elementary school criteria required to participate in the program. Ms. Rigby outlined the program's objectives and outcomes.

Ms. Barbara Larsen, Manager, Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, explained that mentors are assigned to work with each school. Funding for the mentors is received through local health departments; however, it will run out at the end of 2009. She stated that at this point there is no other source of funding to replace it.

Mr. Stan Parrish, Utah Partnership for Healthy Weight, indicated obesity is a very serious health problem. He expressed concern that the focus of federal and state government seems to be more on who is paying for diagnosis and treatment rather than prevention. He stressed the need to spend more time on preventive programs that save money and improve the quality of life. He expressed the need for greater public support and the need to educate the public and municipal leaders on the programs available.

5. Application of Clinical Health Information Exchange to Mental Health Records

Ms. Jan Root, Ph.D., Executive Director, Utah Health Information Network, distributed a written copy of

her testimony. In response to testimony given last month about communication between health care providers, Ms. Root explained how 2008 General Session H.B. 47, "Standards for Electronic Exchange of Clinical Health Information," will set the stage for, but not require, the exchange of clinical health information, including mental health information, among providers. She noted potential obstacles, including federal law, to the exchange of mental health information.

6. Expedited Partner Therapy

Due to lack of time, this item was not discussed.

7. Other Business / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Fisher moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Buttars, Sen Greiner, Rep. Harper, and Rep. Riesen were absent for the vote.

Chair Ray adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.