

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 17, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 29, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2204

**Introduced by Assembly Member Roger Hernández
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bonilla and Fong)**

February 23, 2012

An act to add Chapter 1.6 (commencing with Section 155) to Part 1 of Division 1 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to public health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2204, as amended, Roger Hernández. Health equity index.

Existing law establishes the Office of Multicultural Health within the State Department of Public Health to, among other things, perform strategic planning within the department. Existing law requires the State Department of Health Care Services to develop departmentwide plans for implementation of goals and objectives to close the gaps in health status and access to care among the state's diverse racial and ethnic communities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities.

This bill would require the State Department of Public Health to develop and utilize a health equity tool as part of the department's process for making evidence-based decisions regarding goals and objectives in the department's strategic plan. The bill would require the tool to reflect all available data and trends to enable the department to assess the basic needs of individuals, the quality and sustainability of the environment, adequate levels of economic and social development, health and social equity, and social relationships. ~~It would require the~~

department to annually report to the Legislature and the public on progress being made toward decreasing health disparities in the state.

The bill would also require the department to align annual budget decisions and allocations to achieve the measurable goals, objectives, and benchmarks established in the strategic plan.

The bill would also require each county public health agency to align its strategic plans and budget decisions with the goals, objectives, and benchmarks set by the department according to the healthy community indicators tool. By increasing the duties of local officials, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions:

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
 State-mandated local program: *yes-no*.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:
- 2 (a) The National Institutes of Health defines health disparities
- 3 as the “differences in incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden
- 4 of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among
- 5 specific population groups in the United States.”
- 6 (b) A number of studies show that low-income and ethnic and
- 7 racial communities are more likely to experience a poorer quality
- 8 of health and health care than their white counterparts.
- 9 (c) Poor health outcomes carry significant individual and societal
- 10 cost.
- 11 (d) Access to affordable transportation options, nutritious food,
- 12 safe environments, and health care providers improves health
- 13 outcomes and reduces the rate of chronic disease.
- 14 (e) Monitoring trends in community health status is an important
- 15 public health function.
- 16 (f) In 2007, the State Department of Public Health was
- 17 established. The department is the lead entity in California
- 18 providing core public health functions and services, including

1 health information and strategic planning *related to reducing health*
2 *disparities.*

3 (g) Existing state law authorizes the department to perform
4 studies and disseminate information relating to the protection,
5 preservation, and advancement of public health.

6 ~~(h) As set forth in the department's strategic plan for 2008-2010,~~
7 ~~the department is a performance-based organization.~~
8 ~~Performance-based organizations establish expectations in~~
9 ~~measurable terms, collect data on progress, and make decisions~~
10 ~~with the collected information to adjust course when necessary.~~

11 (h) *The core activities of the department include preventing*
12 *disease, disability, and premature death, reducing or eliminating*
13 *health disparities, and producing and disseminating data to inform*
14 *and evaluate public health strategies and programs.*

15 (i) A goal in the department's strategic plan is to increase quality
16 and years of healthy life, reduce health disparities, and promote
17 health equity.

18 (j) In order to effectively improve health outcomes and address
19 ~~chronic disease~~ *eliminate health disparities*, a tool that profiles
20 and measures the social, economic, and environmental conditions
21 that affect population health is necessary.

22 SEC. 2. Chapter 1.6 (commencing with Section 155) is added
23 to Part 1 of Division 1 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

24
25 CHAPTER 1.6. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

26
27 155. The State Department of Public Health shall develop and
28 utilize a health equity tool, which shall be known as the healthy
29 community indicator, as part of the department's process for
30 making evidence-based decisions regarding goals and objectives
31 in the department's strategic plan. The healthy community indicator
32 shall reflect all available data and trends to enable the department
33 to assess all of the following within a community:

34 (a) Basic needs for all individuals, including, but not limited to,
35 all of the following:

36 (1) Safe, sustainable, accessible, and affordable transportation
37 options.

38 (2) Affordable, accessible, and nutritious healthy foods.

39 (3) Affordable, high-quality, socially integrated, and
40 location-efficient housing.

1 (4) Affordable, accessible, and high-quality health care.

2 (5) Complete and livable communities, including affordable
3 and high-quality schools, parks, recreational facilities, child care,
4 libraries, financial services, and other daily needs.

5 (6) Access to affordable and safe opportunities for physical
6 activity.

7 (b) The quality and sustainability of the environment, as
8 indicated by all of the following:

9 (1) Clean air, soil, and water, and environments free of excessive
10 noise.

11 (2) Tobacco and smoke-free environments.

12 (3) Green and open spaces, including agricultural lands.

13 (4) Minimal toxic substances, emissions, and waste.

14 (5) Affordable and sustainable energy use.

15 (c) Adequate levels of economic and social development, as
16 indicated by all of the following:

17 (1) Living wage and safe and healthy job opportunities for all.

18 (2) Support for the healthy development of children and
19 adolescents.

20 (3) Opportunities for high-quality and accessible education.

21 (d) Health and social equity.

22 (e) Social relationships.

23 156. ~~(a) The State Department of Public Health shall report~~
24 ~~annually to the Legislature and the public on progress being made~~
25 ~~toward decreasing health disparities in the state~~ *develop voluntary*
26 *guidelines for local and regional agencies to incorporate the health*
27 *equity tool into local or regional goals and objectives and into*
28 *local strategic plans for improving health outcomes and health*
29 *equity.*

30 ~~(b) A report submitted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be~~
31 ~~submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government~~
32 ~~Code.~~

33 157. ~~The State Department of Public Health shall align annual~~
34 ~~budget decisions and allocations to achieve measurable goals,~~
35 ~~objectives, and benchmarks established in the department's~~
36 ~~strategic plan.~~

37 158. ~~Each county public health agency shall align its strategic~~
38 ~~plans and budget decisions with the goals, objectives, and~~
39 ~~benchmarks set by the State Department of Public Health in~~
40 ~~accordance with the healthy community indicator tool.~~

1 ~~SEC. 3.—If the Commission on State Mandates determines that~~
2 ~~this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to~~
3 ~~local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made~~
4 ~~pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division~~
5 ~~4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.~~

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