

House Bill 1607

By: Representatives Gardner of the 47th, McBee of the 88th, Henson of the 65th, Skipper of the 137th, Harbin of the 113th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Chapter 5A of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Community Health, so as to provide for reviews of denials of health benefit claims for employees of the board of regents; to amend Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the state employees' health insurance plan, so as to require the promulgation of rules and regulations to entitle employees covered by the state employees' health insurance plan to an administrative review and a review by an independent review organization of the denial of a health benefit claim; to provide for a date certain for adoption of such rules and regulations; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 5A of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Community Health, is amended by striking subsection (e) of Code Section 31-5A-4, relating to the department's powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities with regard to contracts for health benefits, and inserting in its place the following:

"(e) The board of regents is authorized to contract with the department for health benefits for members, employees, and retirees of the board of regents and the dependents of such members, employees, and retirees and for the administration of such health benefits, which benefits shall include a provision for an administrative grievance procedure and a review by an independent review organization equivalent to such reviews established by the department for the state employees' health insurance plan pursuant to subsection (a) of Code Section 45-18-15. The department is also authorized to contract with the board of regents for such purposes."

SECTION 2.

Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the state employees' health insurance plan, is amended by striking subsection (a) of Code Section 45-18-15, relating to rules and regulations for administration of the article, and inserting in its place the following:

“(a) The board shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be required for the effective administration of this article. Such rules and regulations shall be adopted by the board no later than July 1, 2003, and shall include, but not be limited to, rules and regulations establishing a grievance procedure and a review by an independent review organization for claims that have been denied and the conditions under which employees who originally rejected coverage may acquire coverage at a later date. The commissioner of community health, as executive officer of the board, shall employ such personnel as may be needed to carry out this article and such employees shall be employees of the Department of Community Health. The pro rata share of the costs of operating the Department of Community Health in the manner prescribed by law shall be a part of the administrative costs of the employees’ health insurance plan.”

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.