


Councilmember Brandon T. Todd

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A BILL

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To establish the Health Literacy Council to improve the health literacy education of the students of the District of Columbia Public Schools governed by the District of Columbia State Board of Education, public post-secondary schools, and students of District workforce development training providers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Health Literacy Council Establishment Act of 2017”.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this act, the term:

(1) “District Health Literacy Council” or “HLC” means the District of Columbia Health Literacy Council established by this act.

(2) “Health literacy” means the ability to make informed decisions about one’s personal health by being able to evaluate health information for credibility and quality, calculate dosages of medicines and treatments, and understand the components of health plans and health care terminology.

36 (3) "Health literacy level" means an individual's ability to apply health literacy
37 skills
38 to everyday situations and tasks.

39 (4) "Proficient health literacy level" means that an individual can read and
40 understand written health materials; synthesize the information to make to maximize the
41 benefits of healthcare; access the health resources, products, and services they need; and lead a
42 healthy lifestyle".

43 Sec. 3. Establishment of the District Health Literacy Council.

44 There is established a Health Literacy Council in the District of Columbia that shall
45 assist and advise the Mayor and the Council in promoting and improving health literacy of
46 District residents by educating them on the impacts of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care
47 Act, approved March 23, 2010 (124 Stat. 119; 42 U.S.C. § 18001 et seq.), helping them develop
48 health knowledge into a set of positive attitudes and behaviors, teaching how to apply for and
49 access health insurance coverage, teaching them how to communicate health needs to health care
50 providers, and making good health a personal priority.

51 Sec. 4. Health literacy education in schools.

52 The Mayor, in consultation with Office of the State Superintendent of Education
53 ("OSSE"), shall submit to the Council, within 180 days after the effective date of this act, a
54 health literacy education development strategic plan that builds from the current OSSE Health
55 Education Standards to ensure that District high school graduates attain a proficient health
56 literacy level that helps them acquire the essential skills to develop healthy habits and lead
57 healthy lives".

58 Sec. 5. Health literacy education in workforce development programs.

59 The Mayor shall submit to the Council, within 180 days after the effective date of this
60 act, a plan for the implementation of a health literacy education curriculum that will complement
61 adult literacy programs for District agency workforce development training programs in
62 partnership with the DC Workforce Investment Council (“WIC”), the Department of Health Care
63 Finance, The University of the District of Columbia (“UDC”), the Community College of the
64 District of Columbia (“CCDC”), the DC Youth Advisory Council, and the District of Columbia
65 Health Benefit Exchange.

66 Sec. 6. Member of the Health Literacy Council.

67 (a) The Health Literacy Council shall consist of 10 members, as follows:

68 (1) One member shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Council committee
69 with oversight of the Department of Health Care Finance.

70 (2) One member shall be appointed by UDC.

71 (3) One member shall be appointed by CCDC.

72 (4) One member shall be appointed by the District of Columbia Health Benefit
73 Exchange.

74 (5) Seven members shall be appointed by the Mayor and shall be comprised of:

75 A) One member who shall represent the Department of Health Care
76 Finance;

77 B) One member who shall represent the WIC;

78 C) Four members who shall be District residents with extensive
79 knowledge of health resources and services, health education, and in the field of health literacy
80 programs; and

81 D) One member who shall represent the DC Youth Advisory

82 Council.

83 Sec. 6. Duties of the Health Literacy Council.

84 The Health Literacy Council shall:

85 (1) Meet at least quarterly;

86 (2) Create and operate under its own rules of procedure;

87 (3) Develop a plan to be submitted to the Mayor and the Council within 6 months
88 after the effective date of this act, for the coordination of the District's health literacy efforts; and

89 (4) Submit to the Mayor and the Council an annual report and

90 recommendations on the health literacy status of the District, with the first health literacy report
91 and recommendations to be delivered within 12 months of the effective date of this act. In the
92 first annual health literacy report, the FHLC shall endeavor to address, among other issues:

93 (A) Matters related to District residents' health care consumer rights;

94 (B) Access to health care education, health literacy levels;

95 (C) An evaluation of District-wide health literacy level improvement; and

96 (D) An assessment on how to reduce health disparities through health

97 literacy and plans to meet the health literacy needs of older adults, residents with disabilities,

98 residents with English as a second language, residents with minimal internet access, and

99 residents applying for health care for the first time.

100 Sec. 7. Fiscal impact statement.

101 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
102 impact statement required by 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved
103 October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

104 Sec. 8. Effective date.

105 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
106 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
107 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
108 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
109 Columbia Register.