

HB 1234 -- HEALTH ADVOCATES

SPONSOR: Johnson (12)

Subject to appropriation, the Department of Health and Senior Services shall establish a health advocate program in which a health advocate is provided to any eligible pregnant patient who requests one from the Department. For any pregnant patient requesting an advocate, the Department must make the assignment within 20 days of any request, and the assignment shall continue for the entirety of the pregnancy.

A health advocate is not required to be licensed or certified as a health care professional or patient advocate in order to serve in the program. The Department shall determine the duties performed by a health advocate, non-exhaustive examples of which may be found in the bill.

The Department is required to raise awareness and educate the public on the program through a number of actions specified within the bill. Additionally, the "Health Advocate Program Fund" shall be created within the state treasury, which will consist of moneys appropriated to it as well as gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests received from federal, private, or other sources. The Department of Health and Senior Services shall promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the administration of this bill's provisions.