
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 31 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY SCAVELLO, TARTAGLIONE, GREENLEAF, VULAKOVICH,
SCHWANK, BREWSTER, FARNESE, COSTA AND RAFFERTY,
JANUARY 12, 2017

REFERRED TO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, JANUARY 12, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 26, 2001 (P.L.755, No.77), entitled "An
2 act establishing a special fund and account for money
3 received by the Commonwealth from the Master Settlement
4 Agreement with tobacco manufacturers; providing for home and
5 community-based care, for tobacco use prevention and
6 cessation efforts, for Commonwealth universal research
7 enhancement, for hospital uncompensated care, for health
8 investment insurance, for medical assistance for workers with
9 disabilities, for regional biotechnology research centers,
10 for the HealthLink Program, for community-based health care
11 assistance programs, for PACE reinstatement and PACENET
12 expansion, for medical education loan assistance and for
13 percentage allocation and appropriation of moneys," in
14 Commonwealth universal research enhancement, establishing the
15 Spinal Cord Injury Research Program and Spinal Cord Research
16 Advisory Committee, further providing for department
17 responsibilities and for use of funds and providing for
18 spinal cord injury research programs funding.

19 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
20 hereby enacts as follows:

21 Section 1. The act of June 26, 2001 (P.L.755, No.77), known
22 as the Tobacco Settlement Act, is amended by adding a section to
23 read:

24 Section 903.1. Spinal Cord Injury Research Program.

25 (a) Program establishment.--

1 (1) In addition to section 903, there is established in
2 the department a research program that shall be known as the
3 Spinal Cord Injury Research Program. Appropriations from the
4 fund to the department shall be used for research projects
5 regarding spinal cord injuries and related infrastructure by
6 eligible applicants.

7 (2) Funds appropriated to the department for the program
8 may be used to conduct peer reviews and performance reviews.

9 (b) Advisory committee.--

10 (1) The Spinal Cord Research Advisory Committee is
11 established in the department.

12 (2) The secretary shall appoint nine members to the
13 advisory committee, which shall consist of the following:

14 (i) One member representing a Pennsylvania medical
15 college or university.

16 (ii) Two members who are neurosurgeons.

17 (iii) Two members who are physicians who specialize
18 in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

19 (iv) One member who is a physician specializing in
20 the treatment of spinal cord injuries.

21 (v) One member who has a spinal cord injury.

22 (vi) One member who is a family member of a person
23 with a spinal cord injury.

24 (vii) One member who is a veteran who has a spinal
25 cord injury.

26 (3) Terms are as follows:

27 (i) The secretary shall appoint members to a term of
28 two years.

29 (ii) An appointment to fill a vacancy shall be for
30 the period of the unexpired term or until a successor is

1 appointed.

2 (4) The committee shall meet as needed, but at least
3 twice a year, to fulfill the purposes provided for in this
4 chapter. A majority of the members of the committee
5 constitutes a quorum. A majority of the members of the
6 committee has authority to act upon any matter properly
7 before it. The committee may establish rules for its
8 operation and shall hold public hearings, as necessary, to
9 obtain public input and make recommendations to the
10 department regarding research priorities, evaluation and
11 accountability procedures and related issues. Meetings of the
12 committee shall be subject to 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to
13 open meetings).

14 (5) Members shall receive no payment for their services.
15 Members who are not employees of State government shall be
16 reimbursed for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in
17 the course of their official duties.

18 Section 2. Sections 904(1) and (2) and 906 of the act are
19 amended to read:

20 Section 904. Department responsibilities.

21 The department has the following powers and duties:

22 (1) Administer the [health] research [program] programs
23 established under this chapter.

24 (2) Establish, in conjunction with the Health Research
25 Advisory Committee and the Spinal Cord Research Advisory
26 Committee, the research priorities of the Commonwealth. In
27 developing these research priorities, the national health
28 promotion and disease prevention objectives established by
29 the United States Department of Health and Human Services, as
30 applied to this Commonwealth, shall be considered. The

1 priorities shall include the identification of critical
2 research areas, disparities in health status among various
3 Commonwealth populations, expected research outcomes and
4 benefits and disease prevention and treatment methodologies.
5 The priorities shall be reviewed annually and revised as
6 necessary.

7 * * *

8 Section 906. Use of funds.

9 Research projects conducted under this section shall be
10 consistent with the priorities established under section 904(2).
11 Funds under this section shall be allocated for the following
12 purposes:

13 (1) Seventy percent of the funds appropriated under this
14 section shall be used to fund research pursuant to section
15 908.

16 (2) Fifteen percent of the funds appropriated under this
17 section shall be used to fund clinical and health services
18 research projects by eligible applicants.

19 (3) Fifteen percent of the funds appropriated under this
20 section shall be [used to fund other research projects by
21 eligible applicants.] allocated in the following manner:

22 (i) Not less than \$1,000,000 shall be used for
23 research under section 909.1.

24 (ii) The balance shall be used for other research
25 projects by eligible participants.

26 Section 3. The act is amended by adding a section to read:
27 Section 909.1. Spinal cord injury research programs funding.

28 (a) Eligible institutions.--An institution that conducts
29 research on spinal cord injuries in this Commonwealth shall be
30 eligible to receive a grant under section 906(3).

1 (b) Eligible research.--Grants shall be awarded to conduct
2 research into new and innovative treatments and rehabilitative
3 efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal
4 cord injuries, which may include, but are not limited to:

5 (1) pharmaceuticals;

6 (2) medical devices;

7 (3) brain stimulus; and

8 (4) rehabilitative approaches and techniques.

9 (c) Additional funds.--The department may solicit funds to
10 supplement grants awarded for spinal cord injury research under
11 section 906(3).

12 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.