

HOUSE BILL No. 2697

By Committee on Appropriations

2-14

1 AN ACT creating the task force on obesity prevention, management and
2 nutrition education.

3

4 WHEREAS, Kansas is experiencing an obesity epidemic among adults
5 and youth; and

6 WHEREAS, Obesity constitutes a grave threat to the health and well-
7 being of our nation, as rates have risen dramatically over the past decades
8 with particularly strong impact on diverse and disadvantaged
9 communities; and

10 WHEREAS, The United States now has the highest rate of obesity
11 among all developed nations; and

12 WHEREAS, Unless industry, the public and the government work
13 together to address the issue, three in four Americans will become
14 overweight or obese by 2020; and

15 WHEREAS, Data from 2011 shows that 30.2% of Kansas children are
16 overweight or obese; and

17 WHEREAS, Over the past three decades, the childhood obesity rate has
18 more than doubled for preschool children aged 2-5 years and adolescents
19 aged 12-19 years, and it has more than tripled for children aged 6-11 years;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, At present, approximately nine million children over 6
22 years of age are considered obese; and

23 WHEREAS, Physical inactivity and poor nutrition comprise the second
24 leading actual cause of death; and

25 WHEREAS, Overall, 65% of high school students watched two or
26 more hours of television on an average school day, displacing physical
27 activity and increasing caloric intake during viewing; and

28 WHEREAS, Being overweight and obese leads to increased risk for
29 heart disease, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, osteoarthritis, other health
30 conditions and chronic diseases; and

31 WHEREAS, In Kansas, as well as the United States, minority
32 populations are disproportionately affected by being overweight and obese
33 and the resulting complications; and

34 WHEREAS, Healthy eating and physical activity have been proven to
35 reduce one's risk for developing preventable chronic conditions and
36 improving overall physical and mental health; and

1 WHEREAS, Being overweight and obese are causing tremendous
2 increases in national and state health care costs, including state medicaid
3 spending; and

4 WHEREAS, Promoting healthy lifestyles will support family stability
5 since children are severely impacted by disease and death of family
6 members; and

7 WHEREAS, It is of vital importance and in the best interest of the
8 people of the state of Kansas that the current needs of our youth are
9 addressed in a comprehensive and meaningful manner to plan now for
10 Kansas' healthy economic future: Now, therefore,

11 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

12 Section 1. (a) There is hereby created the Kansas task force on
13 obesity prevention and management, hereinafter referred to as the "task
14 force," within the department of health and environment. In addition to
15 any legislative appropriation, the task force may apply for, accept and
16 expend grants and private donations from any source, including federal,
17 state, public and private entities, to assist the task force in carrying out its
18 functions.

19 (b) The duties of the task force shall include, but not be limited to, the
20 following:

21 (1) Recommend ways to promote the recognition of being overweight
22 and obese as a major public health problem in Kansas that also has serious
23 implications for Kansas' economic prosperity.

24 (2) Review data and other research to determine the number of
25 Kansas' children who are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.

26 (3) Identify the contributing factors to the increasing burden of being
27 overweight and obese in Kansas.

28 (4) Recommend ways to help Kansans balance healthy eating with
29 regular physical activity to achieve and maintain a healthy or healthier
30 body weight.

31 (5) Identify and research evidenced-based strategies to promote
32 lifelong physical activity and lifelong healthful nutrition, and to assist
33 those who are already overweight or obese to maintain healthy lifestyles.

34 (6) Identify effective and culturally appropriate interventions to
35 prevent and treat being overweight and obese.

36 (7) Provide policy recommendations to improve healthful nutrition
37 and physical activity for our youth, especially in areas where they
38 congregate such as schools, after-school programs, and community and
39 youth centers.

40 (8) Provide recommendations for parents, caregivers, health care
41 providers, youth leaders and other youth-based programs to encourage and
42 support healthy eating and increased physical activity to promote family
43 strengthening and family stability.

1 (9) Identify and research other states' efforts to provide nutrition
2 education to the public, including, but not limited to, developing and
3 distributing educational materials.

4 (c) The task force shall convene for its first meeting no later than
5 August 1, 2014. The chairperson, vice-chairperson and all members of the
6 task force shall be appointed by the secretary of health and environment.
7 The department of health and environment shall provide such
8 administrative assistance as may be requested by the task force. The task
9 force may adopt such rules of procedure as are necessary to facilitate
10 orderly conduct of its business.

11 (d) The task force shall submit a report, including proposed
12 legislation if necessary, to the governor, the speaker of the house of
13 representatives and the president of the senate, on or before November 1,
14 2015. Such report shall include a comprehensive state plan for
15 implementation of services and programs in the state of Kansas to increase
16 prevention and management of the disease of obesity in children and an
17 estimate of the cost of implementation of such a plan.

18 (e) All departments, boards, agencies, officers and institutions of the
19 state and all subdivisions thereof shall cooperate with the task force in
20 carrying out its purposes pursuant to this section.

21 (f) All members shall be reimbursed for necessary and actual
22 expenses incurred for traveling and subsistence in the performance of
23 serving on the task force from the legislative appropriation to the
24 department of health and environment.

25 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
26 publication in the statute book.