

HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS**HB 944****2026 Regular Session****Hilferty**

HEALTH SERVICES: Creates the Louisiana Women's Health Consortium

Synopsis of Senate Amendments

1. Clarifies that the La. Women's Health Consortium (consortium) is an advisory group created to provide recommendations to the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) on women's health.
2. Removes Ochsner Health System and Woman's Hospital of Baton Rouge as members of the consortium.
3. Clarifies that LDH will not cover expenses of the members.
4. Provides that the chairman and vice chairman of the consortium shall be selected by a majority vote of the members of the consortium.
5. Clarifies that each department participating on the consortium shall provide reasonable staff support to the consortium subject to availability of resources.
6. Provides that the consortium shall only make recommendations to LDH and shall not obligate LDH to enter into any agreement or contract.
7. Changes the annual reporting requirement to a single report.
8. Adds that LDH is not obligated to create new positions, enter into contracts, or expend additional funds absent a specific legislative appropriation.
9. Adds the consortium is subject to Open Meetings Law and LDH shall serve as the records custodian for public information requests.
10. Provides that the consortium shall terminate on June 30, 2027, unless extended by the legislature.

Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate

Proposed law establishes the Women's Health Consortium (consortium) within the La. Dept. of Health (LDH), office on women's health and community health.

Proposed law provides for the membership of the consortium.

Proposed law authorizes the consortium to engage and solicit input, recommendations, and guidance from specified healthcare organizations, educational institutions, and stakeholder groups.

Proposed law provides that members serve at the pleasure of their appointing authorities and authorizes the consortium to adopt procedures and policies for governance, including member removal and vacancy procedures.

Proposed law provides that consortium members serve without compensation and further provides that reimbursement of expenses shall be the responsibility of the entity or agency represented by the member.

Proposed law requires the consortium to elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership and authorizes the election of additional officers.

Proposed law provides that the domicile of the consortium shall be East Baton Rouge Parish and authorizes meetings to be held elsewhere in the state.

Proposed law authorizes the consortium to meet at times and places determined by the membership, establishes quorum requirements, and requires an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting for official action.

Proposed law requires the consortium and its meetings to comply with the Open Meetings Law.

Proposed law requires participating departments to provide reasonable administrative assistance and staff support to the consortium, subject to available personnel, appropriated funding, and existing resources.

Proposed law provides for the functions of the consortium, including development of a Funding Priority Program for Women's Health Initiatives and an Interagency Women's Health Agenda.

Proposed law requires the consortium to identify and evaluate health issues affecting women, including perimenopause, menopause, and postmenopause and to provide recommendations regarding healthcare innovation, medical education and training, workforce impacts, information sharing, public education, and evidence-based resources.

Proposed law requires the consortium and its members to maintain the confidentiality of information, data, and records in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

Proposed law requires the consortium to submit a written report to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library, the House and Senate committees on health and welfare, and the governor's office prior to the convening of the 2027 Regular Session of the Legislature.

Proposed law provides that the duties and responsibilities of the consortium shall be implemented only to the extent funding is appropriated or otherwise made available.

Proposed law specifies that nothing in proposed law shall be construed to require LDH or any participating agency to create new positions, enter into contracts, expend additional funds, or implement consortium recommendations absent legislative approval and available funding.

Proposed law further provides that the consortium serves solely in an advisory capacity and that consortium recommendations, reports, findings, and proposals shall not constitute official policy of LDH unless separately adopted by the department.

Proposed law designates LDH as the records custodian for the consortium for purposes of public records and open meetings laws.

Proposed law terminates on June 30, 2027, unless extended by the legislature.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 46:2527)