

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 329

BY REPRESENTATIVE ARMES

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

INSURANCE/GROUP-STATE: Requires the state Office of Group Benefits to cover bariatric surgery techniques for the treatment of morbid obesity

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 42:860, relative to the state Office of Group Benefits; to require coverage for treatment for morbid obesity; to provide for certain requirements; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 42:860 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§860. Morbid obesity; legislative findings; coverage required

A. The legislature hereby finds and declares that obesity is a significant health problem affecting hundreds of thousands of Louisiana residents. Morbid obesity increases the mortality rate more than threefold, causes physical and emotional disability, and is often associated with comorbid health conditions, including hypertension, cardiopulmonary conditions, and diabetes, all of which compound the impact of obesity on longevity and quality of life. Obese Louisiana residents are ninety percent more likely to have diabetes and fifty percent more likely to have high blood pressure than those who are not obese. Therapeutic interventions can alter the course and severity of obesity and morbid obesity has successfully been treated through established surgical treatments.

B.(1) As used in this Section, the term "morbid obesity" shall mean either of the following:

1 (a) A body mass index equal to or greater than forty kilograms per meter
2 squared.

3 (b) A body mass index equal to or greater than thirty-five kilograms per
4 meter squared along with an associated comorbidity including but not limited to
5 hypertension, cardiopulmonary conditions, sleep apnea, or diabetes.

6 (2) As used in this Section, the term "body mass index" shall mean a
7 practical marker used to assess the degree of obesity, calculated by dividing the
8 weight in kilograms by the height in meters squared.

9 C. The Office of Group Benefits programs shall offer a provision stating that
10 benefits shall be payable for the treatment of morbid obesity, as defined in Paragraph
11 (B)(1) of this Section, through gastric bypass surgery or other methods as may be
12 recognized by the National Institutes of Health as effective for the long-term reversal
13 of morbid obesity.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 329 Original

2015 Regular Session

Armes

Abstract: Mandates that the state Office of Group Benefits offer coverage for treatment of morbid obesity through gastric bypass surgery or other methods recognized by the National Institutes of Health.

Proposed law defines "morbid obesity" as a body mass index (BMI) of at least 40 or a BMI of at least 35 along with comorbidity or existing medical conditions such as hypertension, cardiopulmonary conditions, sleep apnea, or diabetes.

Proposed law requires the Office of Group Benefits to offer a provision stating that benefits shall be payable for the treatment of morbid obesity through gastric bypass surgery or other methods recognized by the National Institutes of Health as effective for the long-term reversal of morbid obesity.

(Adds R.S. 42:860)