

SB4002



102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2021 and 2022

SB4002

Introduced 1/21/2022, by Sen. Karina Villa

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

Provides that the Act may be referred to as the Addressing Health Equity for Uninsured and Underinsured Illinois Residents Through the Support of Free and Charitable Clinics Law. Contains background provisions. Appropriates a total of \$15,000,000 from the State Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency Fund to the Department of Healthcare and Family Services for provision to the Illinois Association of Free and Charitable Clinics for specified grants and expenses. Provides that no less than 70% of the funds shall be used for expenses relating to free and charitable clinics serving minority populations. Effective July 1, 2022.

LRB102 24187 CPF 33415 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning appropriations.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented**
3 **in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. References to Act. This Act may be referred to
5 as the Addressing Health Equity for Uninsured and Underinsured
6 Illinois Residents Through the Support of Free and Charitable
7 Clinics Law.

8 Section 5. Background.

9 (1) Data released in December 2021 from the U.S. Census
10 Bureau revealed that the number of residents with health
11 insurance declined in Illinois.

12 (2) Safety net health care for the uninsured is imminently
13 needed for the estimated 800,000 Illinois residents who lost
14 their employer-sponsored health insurance due to the pandemic.

15 (3) Illinois' 52 free and charitable clinics improve access
16 to quality health care for over 100,000 uninsured and
17 underinsured individuals, many of whom are uninsured or
18 underinsured for the first time and in need of immediate health
19 care and are navigating a new health care system in the midst
20 of a pandemic.

21 (4) Clinics are the entry point to quality health care
22 providing a variety of services like primary care, dental care,

1 and behavioral health care, pharmacy services or referrals to
2 charitable pharmacies, social services, and access to care
3 accommodations.

4 (5) The patients of free and charitable clinics are those
5 who have the largest inequities with the most barriers to the
6 health care system.

7 (6) 38% of patients are below 100% of the federal poverty
8 level (FPL), 43% of patients are between 100%-200% of the FPL,
9 and 19% of patients are at least 200% above the FPL.

10 (7) 73% of patients of free and charitable clinics are from
11 minority communities.

12 (8) In 2019 and 2020, clinic volunteers provided 586,924
13 hours of medical care with a conservative estimated value of
14 over \$16,000,000.

15 (9) During the same time frame, Illinois' free and
16 charitable clinics saved the State over \$36,000,000 in averted
17 emergency department visits.

18 (10) Clinics are being stretched to the limit as they combat
19 the current surge in COVID-19.

20 (11) Illinois free and charitable clinics do not receive
21 State funding and are unable to access federal funding,
22 including the COVID-19 economic stimulus packages passed by
23 Congress, because the clinics do not fit the definition of
24 "Federally Qualified Health Centers."

25 (12) Already understaffed with fewer volunteer providers

1 due to the pandemic, the clinics now must divert existing,
2 limited staff to perform COVID testing on top of ongoing efforts
3 to vaccinate vulnerable populations and treat patients
4 suffering from the longer-term health consequences of the
5 virus.

6 (13) Free and charitable clinics are needed now more than
7 ever to care for the uninsured and underinsured as their trusted
8 medical provider.

9 (14) To continue to meet the rising and urgent health care
10 needs of vulnerable Illinois residents who are addressing the
11 largest barriers to care, and collaborate with local health
12 departments to test and vaccinate the State's most at-risk
13 communities against the present and future variants of COVID,
14 clinics are in critical need of additional funding support.

15 (15) Funding is essential if the clinics are to continue
16 to operate effectively on the frontlines of the pandemic as
17 trusted entities able to increase vaccine uptake in hard-to-
18 reach communities while also remaining a vital part of
19 Illinois' safety net.

20 (16) Funding would also secure and strengthen the capacity
21 of free clinics to support the State's efforts to transform
22 public health, strengthen primary care, decrease hospital
23 burden, advance health equity, and improve population health.

24 Section 10. The sum of \$7,500,000, or so much thereof as

1 may be necessary, is appropriated from the State Coronavirus
2 Urgent Remediation Emergency Fund to the Department of
3 Healthcare and Family Services for provision to the Illinois
4 Association of Free and Charitable Clinics for grants and
5 administrative expenses associated with the prevention and
6 treatment of COVID-19 and the ongoing fulfillment of public
7 health services provided at free or reduced cost allowed by
8 Section 9901 of the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
9 and any associated federal guidance. No less than 70% of all
10 funds appropriated to the Department of Healthcare and Family
11 Services under this Section shall be used for expenses pursuant
12 to free and charitable clinics serving minority populations.

13 Section 15. The sum of \$7,500,000, or so much thereof as
14 may be necessary, is appropriated to the Department of
15 Healthcare and Family Services for provision to the Illinois
16 Association of Free and Charitable Clinics for the following:

17 (1) Grants and other expenses of free and charitable
18 clinics in Illinois that assist in or make referrals for
19 prevention, vaccination, and testing of COVID-19.

20 (2) Grants and other expenses of free and charitable
21 clinics that assist uninsured or underinsured people living
22 with acute and chronic health issues through outreach, health
23 education, screening and testing, and behavioral health
24 services.

1 No less than 70% of all funds appropriated to the Department
2 of Healthcare and Family Services under this Section shall be
3 used for expenses relating to free and charitable clinics
4 serving minority populations.

5 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
6 2022.