

SENATE BILL SUMMARY

Prepared by the Division of Legislative Information for the Senate Bill **AS ORIGINALLY FILED**. For more detail, see Senate Bill Analyses, if available, prepared by the Senate's professional committee staff.

SB 162 Electronic Health Records by Senator Ring

Creates the "Florida eHealth Initiative Act." Requires the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), subject to a specific appropriation, to award and monitor matching grants to health information organizations that submit proposals that advance the development of a statewide health information exchange. Requires the AHCA to establish, by rule, specific eligibility criteria for qualification for development, operation, and collaboration grants. Requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to complete an independent evaluation of the grants program administered by the AHCA and submit the report to the Governor and Legislature.

Creates the Electronic Medical Records System Adoption Loan Program to provide a one-time, no-interest loan for the initial costs of implementing an electronic medical records system. Specifies that such loans are to be provided to eligible physicians licensed under medical practice or osteopathic medicine provisions, or to an eligible business entity whose shareholders are licensed under those provisions.

Creates the Florida Health Information Exchange Advisory Council and requires the Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis within the AHCA to provide staff support.

Provides duties of the AHCA regarding information on its Internet website for federal and private sector health information exchange funding programs and state and national legislative, regulatory, and public awareness activities related to health information exchanges. Requires the AHCA to develop and implement a plan to promote participation in regional and statewide health information exchanges.

Expands access to a patient's medical records and laboratory reports to facilitate electronic exchange of data between certain health care facilities, practitioners, providers, and attending physicians. (See bill for details)