



**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

June 27, 2007

Mr. Kurt S. Browning  
Secretary of State  
R.A. Gray Building  
500 S. Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Secretary Browning:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of Florida, under the provisions of Article III, Section 8, of the Constitution of Florida, I do hereby transmit Council Substitute for House Bill 1269, with my signature, enacted during the 109<sup>th</sup> Session of the Legislature of Florida, since statehood in 1845, during the Regular Session of 2007 and entitled:

An act relating to infant mortality ...

This bill creates the black infant health practice initiative to determine factors that contribute to elevated rates of infant mortality in minority populations, and to develop strategies to address the disparity. The bill appropriates \$1 million to the Department of Health to implement this initiative in both urban and rural areas.

I fully support the intent of the bill but have concerns that the bill does not provide the Department of Health procedures for awarding grants and monitoring these programs. As stewards of public funds, we must ensure that clear and transparent guidelines are in place to award grants. Given these concerns, I am directing the Department of Health to develop a fair methodology for awarding grants and provide strong accountability measures to ensure that grant funds are spent appropriately.

This bill provides an important step in addressing racial disparities in infant mortality. For this reason, I hereby sign into law, Council Substitute for House Bill 1269 and ask the Legislature to consider the concerns identified herein.

Sincerely,

Charlie Crist

CC/dmm

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA