

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2017**

**HOUSE BILL 741**  
**RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDY ISSUES PERTAINING TO HIGH-QUALITY, RISK-APPROPRIATE MATERNAL AND NEONATAL CARE AND TO ALLOW SIMULTANEOUS CREMATION OF CERTAIN FETUSES AND INFANTS.

Whereas, pregnant and postpartum women require timely, comprehensive medical services matched to their clinical complexity; and

Whereas, medically complex pregnant mothers and newborns should be cared for in a medical facility that can meet their specific medical needs; and

Whereas, maternity and newborn care providers are not geographically distributed to best meet health care needs; and

Whereas, studies have demonstrated that timely access to risk appropriate neonatal and obstetric care can reduce infant mortality and maternal severe morbidity and mortality; and

Whereas, health care facilities across North Carolina have varied capabilities to care for mothers and newborns with complex needs; and

Whereas, designating facilities with specific "levels of care" offers uniform criteria about the capability of health care facilities to provide complexity of care to pregnant women and newborns; and this approach is endorsed by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and a number of other national medical organizations; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.(a)** The Department of Health and Human Services shall study and analyze North Carolina's ability to provide women with timely and equitable access to high-quality, risk-appropriate maternal and neonatal care. The study shall examine at least all of the following:

- (1) The complexity levels of care currently being provided by all delivering hospitals in caring for birth mothers and newborns.
- (2) How current systems of referral and transport to different facilities and specialty providers based on patient risk are being managed.
- (3) Disparities in access to risk-appropriate maternal and hospital care.
- (4) Service gaps.
- (5) Issues that impact the ability to most appropriately match patient need with provider skill.
- (6) Recommendations for actionable steps that can be taken in North Carolina to best ensure that pregnant women receive quality prenatal care and that mothers and newborns are cared for in a facility that can meet their specific clinical needs.
- (7) Any other issues the Department deems relevant to this study.

**SECTION 1.(b)** The Department shall make an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the 2019 Regular Session of the 2019 General Assembly on or before May



1, 2019, and a final report of its findings and recommendations, including any recommended legislation, to the 2020 General Assembly.

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 90-210.129 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 90-210.129. Cremation procedures.**

...  
(h) The simultaneous cremation of the human remains of more than one person within the same cremation chamber is ~~forbidden~~-forbidden, provided that the following human remains may be cremated simultaneously upon the express written direction of the authorized agent:

- (1) The human remains of multiple fetuses from the same mother and the same birth.
- (2) The human remains of multiple persons up to the age of one year old from the same mother and the same birth.

...."

**SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2018.

s/ Philip E. Berger  
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roy Cooper  
Governor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ .m. this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2018