

March 7, 2007

EXECUTIVE ORDER 979

MISSISSIPPI HEALTH INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, a presidential executive order "Promoting Quality and Efficient Health Care in Federal Government Administered or Sponsored Health Care Programs" was issued on August 22, 2006, and President George W. Bush directed federal agencies that administer or sponsor federal health insurance programs to:

- increase transparency in pricing;
- increase transparency in quality;
- encourage adoption of health information technology ("IT") standards; and
- provide options that promote quality and efficiency in health care.

WHEREAS, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the need for timely, secure and accessible health information, particularly for Mississippi's most vulnerable – elderly, disabled, and low income populations – and the potentially life-threatening effects of failure to have the information;

WHEREAS, Mississippi is coordinating a wide-range of efforts directed at recovering from Hurricane Katrina and enhancing its health care delivery system;

WHEREAS, a statewide health information technology infrastructure would improve the quality and reduce the cost of health care in Mississippi by:

1. Ensuring health information is available at the point of care for all individuals;
2. Reducing medical errors and avoiding duplicative medical procedures;
3. Improving coordination of care between hospitals, physicians, and other health professionals;
4. Providing consumers with their health information to encourage greater participation in their health care decisions;
5. Enhancing the confidentiality and privacy of medical information;
6. Improving public health services within the state; and
7. Furthering health care research.

WHEREAS, establishing a Mississippi Health Information Infrastructure Task Force will guide legislative and regulatory actions, encourage coordinated efforts in the private healthcare sector, further public and private task forces for the development of interstate health information infrastructure, and maximize federal financial participation to support the goal of early adoption of an interstate health information technology infrastructure;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Haley Barbour, Governor of the State of Mississippi, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of this State, do hereby:

1. Create a Mississippi Health Information Infrastructure Task Force ("Task Force");
2. Direct the Task Force to review issues surrounding the creation of a statewide and inter-state health information technology infrastructure to improve the quality and safety of health care delivery in Mississippi;
3. The Task Force shall be composed of twenty members. Members shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at his pleasure;
4. The Task Force shall act by a vote of the majority of its members. A quorum of at least ten members shall be required for an act of the Task Force to have effect. No member may grant a proxy for his or her vote to any other member or member designee, except with the prior approval of the Chairs. The Governor will fill by appointment any vacancy on the Task Force;
5. Provide that the Co-Chairpersons of the Task Force shall be designated by the Governor from among the Task Force's membership;

6. Direct the Task Force to develop recommendations for:

- An overall strategy for the adoption and use of health information technology and health information exchange to improve health and health care in Mississippi;
- Identifying the benefits and costs of a comprehensive statewide health information technology infrastructure;
- Addressing potential technical, scientific, economic, security, privacy and other issues related to the adoption of interoperable healthcare information technology;
- Identifying existing health information technology resources, including funding sources, to support the development of a statewide health information infrastructure;
- Identifying technology options to realize a comprehensive health care information infrastructure;
- Ensuring health information privacy and security in electronic health information exchange.

7. Direct all Executive branch departments, agencies, boards, and commissions and any other divisions of the Executive branch of state government to fully cooperate with the Task Force and provide staff support and any other assistance as requested;

8. Direct the Task Force to submit an Action Plan for Health Information Infrastructure to my office no later than 180 days after constituting the Task Force. This plan should detail recommended actions, staffing requirements, funding options, and key milestone dates to achieve within the next two years as stated in this Executive Order;

9. Provide that the Task Force annually report to the Governor on its plans, activities, accomplishments, and recommendations;

10. The Task Force shall continue in existence until all of its objectives are achieved, but no later than March 6, 2009, unless extended by a future Executive Order;

11. Authorize the Task Force to seek grants from government or private sources to achieve the goals and objectives set forth.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, given under my hand and under the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi.
DONE in the City of Jackson, on the 7th day of March in the year of our Lord, two thousand and seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-first.



HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR