

HB 788 -- Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Sponsor: Cooper (155)

This bill changes the laws regarding public health emergency preparedness. The bill:

- (1) Defines "emergency plan," "responder," and "volunteer";
- (2) Specifies that health care professionals and emergency responders deployed during an emergency are exempt from civil penalty unless the act or omission is intentional or careless;
- (3) Specifies that the Governor, in a state of emergency, can issue an executive order requiring medical care be given at temporary facilities if the number of seriously ill or injured persons exceeds hospital capacity;
- (4) Allows the Governor to waive or suspend administrative rules that would hinder or delay the ability of the Department of Health and Senior Services to respond to a declared emergency;
- (5) Specifies that the department can recruit, train, and accept the services of citizen volunteers to dispense medication; and
- (6) Requires the department to provide volunteers with access to professional staff for training and oversight, develop written rules, and make sure volunteers understand their responsibilities.