

1 S.285

2 Introduced by Senator Kittell

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Commerce; trade; farmer and agribusiness insurance cooperative

6 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to allow the agency of agriculture,
7 food and markets to purchase health insurance in the small group market as an
8 association for farmers.

9 An act relating to authorizing a health insurance purchasing association for
10 farmers

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 2963(c) is added to read:

13 (c)(1) For purposes of this subsection, “farmer” means a person:

14 (A) who earns at least one-half of his or her annual gross income

15 from the business of farming as that term is defined in Regulation 1.175-3

16 issued under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

17 (B)(i) who produces farm crops that are processed in a farm facility

18 or on a housesite adjoining the enrolled land;

19 (ii) whose gross income from the sale of the processed farm

20 products pursuant to subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B), when added to

1 other gross income from the business of farming as used in subdivision (A) of
2 this subdivision (1), equals at least one-half of the farmer's annual gross
3 income; and

4 (iii) who produces on the farm a minimum of 75 percent of the
5 farm crops processed in the farm facility.

6 (2) The development division shall operate a farmer's health insurance
7 program, which shall be deemed an association under 8 V.S.A. § 4079(4) for
8 the purpose of purchasing health insurance in the small group market. The
9 division shall:

10 (A) offer at least one small group health insurance plan to farmers,
11 their spouses, and their dependents;

12 (B) actively market the plans to farmers;

13 (C) inform farmers about health care trends and cost increases;

14 (D) engage farmers in choosing small group health insurance plans
15 offered by the division in order to ensure that the plans meet the needs of
16 farmers.

17 Sec. 2. 8 V.S.A. § 4079 is amended to read:

18 § 4079. GROUP INSURANCE POLICIES; DEFINITIONS

19 * * *

20 (4) the farmer's health insurance program operated by the agency of
21 agriculture, food and markets under 6 V.S.A. § 2963.

1 (5) Under a policy issued to any other substantially similar group which,
2 in the discretion of the commissioner, may be subject to the issuance of a
3 group accident and sickness policy or contract.

4 Sec. 3. REPORT

5 No later than January 15, 2011, the agency of agriculture, food and markets
6 shall provide a report on the number of farmers and their families who have
7 purchased health insurance through the division and the number of farmers and
8 families who had previously been uninsured.

9 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 Secs. 1 and 2 of this act shall take effect on October 1, 2010. Sec. 3 and
11 this section shall take effect upon passage.