

State considers creating health insurance pool for chronically ill

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A bill up for house approval would require the state to create a special health insurance pool for thousands of chronically ill people who are uninsured or can't afford coverage.

People with high-risk health conditions, such as multiple sclerosis or hemophilia, would be able to get health insurance at rates no greater than 175% of standard insurance rates. Expenses would be paid through premiums and a fee of up to \$2, phased in through 2013, per each traditional customer. A federal grant would provide operating cost and jumpstart the program. 1.4 million people in North Carolina are currently uninsured. A similar measure was passed last year, but never reached the Senate floor. A Senate committee is considering a similar bill in committee.