

SENATE No. 811

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act to establish community based grant programs to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in the Commonwealth..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 111N of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the
2 following section:–

3 Section 7. (a) The office shall, subject to appropriation, administer a community-based
4 agency disparities reduction grant program. The grants shall support efforts by community-based
5 agencies to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities among predominantly underserved
6 populations, including efforts addressing social factors integral to such disparities. Grants shall
7 be awarded following a competitive application process. In awarding grants, the office shall give
8 priority to programs replicable by other community-based agencies. Grants shall be provided to a
9 broad range of agencies that support diverse communities throughout the state. No community-
10 based agency may receive more than one grant concurrently. All grants shall include an
11 evaluation component.

12 (b) The program shall provide grants to community-based agencies and non-profit
13 community organizations to address key disparities issues including but not limited to: the social

14 and economic barriers that impact health outcomes, the development of a diverse healthcare
15 workforce across wide range of healthcare professions, increasing the access, utilization and
16 quality of healthcare services, and supporting community health workers to facilitate the use of
17 health and human services

18 (c) For the purposes of this section, a “community-based agency” shall include agencies
19 that provide direct services, education, or support to underserved populations, including
20 community health centers and hospitals, social service organizations, community nonprofit
21 organizations, educational institutions, faith based organizations and other non-governmental
22 agencies and other organizations as defined by the office.