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**News Release
July 19, 2007**

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**Lt. Governor Perdue and Health and Wellness Trust
Fund Commission Approves Funding for High-Risk
Health Insurance Pool**

(Raleigh) This morning, the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission approved a one-time allocation of up to \$5 million to support the establishment of a high-risk health insurance pool being debated by the NC General Assembly. Lt. Governor Bev Perdue, who chairs the Commission, urged state lawmakers to pass the high-risk health insurance pool this year.

A high-risk pool would provide access to health insurance for people with serious health conditions that are often debilitating. Many times these “high-risk” patients are deemed uninsurable or are unable to afford health insurance because of their pre-existing conditions or lifetime policy limits.

“A high-risk insurance pool provides an opportunity for the sickest of the sick to get access to the health services they need,” said Lt. Governor Bev Perdue. “The high-risk pool, along with our efforts to expand children’s health insurance this session, are important steps to help the uninsured in North Carolina.”

Perdue and the Commission urged state lawmakers to find long-term funding for the high-risk health insurance pool. The \$5 million allocation is contingent on the North Carolina General Assembly authorizing the creation of a high-risk pool during the 2007 session. North Carolina would join 34 other states that now have a high-risk health insurance pool.

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Vandana Shah, Executive Director