Summary

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Department of Public Health to confidentially notify partners of infected individuals of the possibility of being exposed to the HIV virus. Specifically, whenever the Department of Public Health receives a report that an individual is infected with HIV, an employee of the Department of Public and confidentially interview the individual to seek the names and whereabouts of the sexual partners and/or needle-sharing partners of the infected individual.

Model Legislation

{Title, enacting clause, etc.}

Section 1. This act may be cited as the HIV Partner Notification Act.

Section 2.

(A) The state Department of Public Health shall establish a program for partner notification and referral services for persons with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection.

(B) As of the effective date of this Act, every physician or health care provider receiving a confirmed positive HIV test result shall confidentially report to the Department of Public Health the name, address and any other information the Department may require by rule, of any person found to be infected with HIV. In addition, every person performing HIV testing by court order or as manipulated by law receives notification of a confirmed positive HIV test result shall similarly report to the Department of Public Health.

(C) Whenever the Department of Public Health receives a report than an individual is infected with HIV, an employee of the Department shall personally and confidentially interview the individual who is the subject of the report and shall seek to obtain the names and whereabouts of the sexual partners and/or needle-sharing partners of the infected individual. Such an infected individual may not be penalized for refusing or failing to volunteer the identity of his sexual and/or needle-sharing partners.

(D) The Department shall attempt to notify each individual named as a partner under Subsection (C) of this Section and shall inform that individual of:

(1) the possibility that the individual has been exposed;

(2) the methods of transmission and methods of prevention of HIV infection;

(3) the availability of diagnostic testing;

(4) the reliability of testing procedures;

(5) the availability of medical treatment for the infection and its resultant secondary infections if diagnosed;

(6) the presumption that a person who is infected with HIV is infected for life; and

(7) the responsibility of an infected person not to knowingly infect others;

(E) The Department may not disclose to the partner the name or other identifying information concerning the identity of the individual supplying the partner’s name.

(F) The information given under this Section concerning a partner of an individual who has AIDS or HIV infection is confidential and may be used only for the purpose of notifying the partner and providing information to the partner.

Section 3. The Department of Public Health shall request monthly HIV infection reports on this state’s residents and intended residents tested by federal agencies, including, but not limited to the Job Corps, Peace Corps, Foreign Service, State Department, Department of Defense (including applicants, active duty personnel, and reserves), National Guard, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The reports requested by the Department shall include, whenever possible, the
name, address, and telephone number of persons testing positive for HIV infection, for purpose of partner identification and notification under this Act. The Department shall publish a monthly statistical compilation report of reports received under this Section.

Section 4. The Department of Public Health shall annually report to the legislature an evaluation of its partner notification program, including:

(A) The number of individuals reported to the Department of to the designated local health authorities as being infected with HIV;

(B) The number of infected individuals interviewed for purposes of seeking the names of their sexual and/or needle-sharing partners;

(C) The number of notified sexual and/or needle-sharing partners notified who subsequently were reported as infected; and

(D) The number of notified sexual and/or needle-sharing partners notified who subsequently were reported as infected; and

(E) Any other elements of a program evaluation which the Department or the State Auditor deems reasonable.

Section 5. For purposes of the Act:

(A) “HIV” means the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or any other identified causative agent of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

(B) “HIV test” means an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) to determine the presence of antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), or such other test as may be approved by the Department of Public Health; in the event of a positive result, the Western Blot Assay, or a more reliable confirmatory test, shall also be administered prior to notification of the test result.

(C) “Sexual partner” means a person with whom the HIV-infected individual has had intimate sexual relations during the period in which the Department employee believes the individual may have been infected;

(D) “Needle-sharing partner” means any person with whom the HIV-infected person has shared equipment, products, or materials of any kind which are used to inject a substance into the human body.

Section 6. {Severability Clause.}

Section 7. {Repealer Clause.}

Section 8. {Effective Date.}