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- HPC indicates the Public Regulation Commission's Division of Insurance has currently established a limited managed care ombudsman program to achieve the intent of the Patient Protection Act. Supplemental assistance for those cases which cannot be resolved informally is provided by a voluntary review panel.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$120.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY02 shall revert to the general fund.

RELATIONSHIP

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee acted on 2/16/01 to add to HB2 \$75.0 in general fund to the Department of Health's budget to be transferred to DDPC for an ombudsman program.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Review federal regulations to assure that no conflict of interest would arise as a result of implementing HB482.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

- SAOA proposes as an alternative to enactment of HB482 that the state's current disability programs and administering departments develop an alternative dispute resolution system to protect clients and applicants for services.
- HPC proposes as an alternative to enactment of HB482 that DD individuals utilize privately funded advocacy groups such as Protect and Advocacy Inc, or settle disputes in court.

RAE/njw