

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to preventing the spread of avian
3 influenza; creating the Be Ready Task Force within the
4 Department of Health for a specified purpose;
5 providing for membership and meetings of the task
6 force; providing that task force members are entitled
7 to receive reimbursement for per diem and travel
8 expenses; requiring the task force to develop
9 specified recommendations; requiring the task force to
10 submit a report of its recommendations to the Governor
11 and the Legislature by a specified date; providing for
12 dissolution of the task force; providing an effective
13 date.

14
15 WHEREAS, avian influenza cases are rising in the animal
16 population in the United States, and

17 WHEREAS, there have been at least 61 reported cases of
18 animal-to-human transmission since April 2024, and

19 WHEREAS, a recent fatal case in Louisiana showed a genetic
20 mutation that could possibly lead to human-to-human
21 transmission, and

22 WHEREAS, it is imperative that Florida convene a task force
23 to prepare a comprehensive statewide response strategy to
24 prevent the spread of avian influenza in this state, NOW,
25 THEREFORE,

26
27 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
28

29 **Section 1.** There is hereby created the Be Ready Task
30 Force, a task force as defined in s. 20.03(5), Florida Statutes,
31 within the Department of Health for the purpose of developing a
32 comprehensive statewide response strategy to prevent the spread
33 of avian influenza in the livestock population of this state and
34 preparing for the probability of human-to-human transmission of
35 avian influenza in this state. The department shall provide
36 administrative support to the task force.

37 (1) (a) The task force shall be composed of the following
38 members:

39 1. Two physicians specializing in infectious diseases who
40 are on staff with a medical school in this state and have a
41 background in public health, appointed by the Governor.

42 2. The State Surgeon General and the Deputy Secretary of
43 Health or their designees. The State Surgeon General or his or
44 her designee shall serve as the chair of the task force.

45 3. Two representatives of the Division of Emergency
46 Management, appointed by the director.

47 4. Three representatives from county health departments,
48 with at least one representative from a rural county, appointed
49 by the Governor.

50 5. One representative of a water management district,

51 appointed by the Governor.

52 6. Two representatives of the Department of Agriculture
53 and Consumer Services who have experience working with the
54 livestock industry, appointed by the Commissioner of
55 Agriculture.

56 (b) The task force shall meet upon the call of the chair
57 and as often as necessary to complete its duties under this
58 section. The task force may conduct its meetings through
59 teleconference or other electronic means.

60 (c) Members of the task force shall serve without
61 compensation, but may be reimbursed for per diem and travel
62 expenses as provided in s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

63 (2) The task force shall develop recommendations on all of
64 the following:

65 (a) Monitoring and reporting livestock with avian
66 influenza, including the location for each outbreak.

67 (b) Wastewater monitoring for avian influenza
68 transmission.

69 (c) How to cost-effectively implement statewide testing
70 for avian influenza.

71 (d) Ways in which the state can implement a statewide
72 response to prevent the spread of avian influenza among
73 livestock as well as humans.

74 (3) The task force shall submit a report of its
75 recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate,

HB 627

2025

76 | and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by October 1,
77 | 2025. The task force is dissolved upon submission of its report.

78 | **Section 2.** This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.