

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 41

BY SENATOR BROOME

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to examine the benefits of routine nutritional screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment for those who are malnourished or at risk for malnutrition, as well as examine the benefits of nutrition screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment as part of the standard for evidenced-based hospital care, to support an increased emphasis on nutrition through the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, as well as for Medicare beneficiaries, to improve their disease management and health outcomes, and to express encouragement that preventive and wellness services, such as counseling for obesity and chronic disease management, are part of the Essential Health Benefits package included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) has established policy promoting the importance of quality nutrition for all Americans in order to maintain healthy, active, independent lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, the NBCSL adopted policy supporting increased access to quality nutrition and support for infants and children, as passed by the United States Congress in Resolution HHS-11-19; and

WHEREAS, leading health and nutrition experts agree that nutrition status is a direct measure of patient health and that good nutrition and good patient health can keep people healthy and out of institutionalized health care facilities, thus reducing healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, inadequate or unbalanced nutrition, known as malnutrition, is not routinely viewed as a medical concern in this nation, and that malnutrition is particularly prevalent in vulnerable populations, such as older adults, hospitalized patients, or minority populations that statistically shoulder the highest incidences of the most severe chronic illnesses such as diabetes, kidney disease, and cardiovascular disease; and

WHEREAS, illness, injury, and malnutrition can result in the loss of lean body mass, leading to complications that impact good patient health outcomes, including recovery from surgery, illness, or disease; the elderly lose lean body mass more quickly and to a greater extent than younger adults and weight assessment (body weight and body mass index) can overlook accurate indicators of lean body mass; and

WHEREAS, the American Nursing Association defines therapeutic nutrition as the administration of food and fluids to support the metabolic processes of a patient who is malnourished or at high risk of becoming malnourished; and

WHEREAS, access to therapeutic nutrition is critical in restoring lean body mass such that it resolves malnutrition challenges and, in turn, improves clinical outcomes, reduces health care costs, and can keep people and our communities healthy; and

WHEREAS, despite the recognized link between good nutrition and good health, nutritional screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment have not been incorporated as routine medical treatments across the spectrum of health care.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana urges and requests that the Department of Health and Hospitals examine the benefits of routine nutritional screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment for those who are malnourished or at risk for malnutrition, as well as examine the benefits of nutrition screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment as part of the standard for evidenced-based hospital care.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana supports an increased emphasis on nutrition through the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, as well as for Medicare beneficiaries, to improve their disease management and health outcomes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana is encouraged that preventive and wellness services, such as counseling for obesity and chronic disease management, are part of the Essential Health Benefits package included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the president of the United States, the vice president of the United States, the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, to each

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**ENROLLED**

member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress, and to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES