

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 83

BY REPRESENTATIVES ECHOLS AND THOMPSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to create a task force to study, identify, and make recommendations to address the shortage of specialist physicians in this state.

WHEREAS, according to a 2022 report from the Association of American Medical Colleges, rural areas in the United States have twenty percent of the population, but only eleven percent of the physicians; and

WHEREAS, the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) reported that rural areas in the United States estimated thirteen and one-tenth physicians per every ten thousand people; and

WHEREAS, the thirteen and one-tenth physicians per every ten thousand people reported by the NRHA was significantly lower in comparison than the estimated thirty-one and two-tenths physicians per every ten thousand people in urban areas in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in order to promote a healthier Louisiana, it is imperative to ascertain the adequate number and specialty type of physicians necessary to address the myriad healthcare needs of Louisiana citizens; and

WHEREAS, there are programs that have been created in the state of Louisiana to address the physician shortage in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has established a multistate job board to connect employers with doctors working in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of such programs has not made significant changes to the high number of physician vacancies and poor referral rates; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana does not have a reliable method of determining the location and specialty of licensed physicians currently practicing in this state; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is working to develop and expand programs aimed at encouraging physicians to participate in Louisiana residency training programs and to continue to reside and provide medical care in this state; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the state to gather and analyze information and data in order to be more successful and strategic in physician recruitment and retention; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to ensure the retention of specialists in this state so residents of the state do not have to travel outside of the state for specialty medical treatment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to create a task force to conduct research and make recommendations to address the current and future needs of this state to maintain the necessary number and specialty type of physicians to provide health care for our citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall do all of the following:

(1) Study all aspects of the supply and demand for physicians in Louisiana, including but not limited to the availability and reliability of data associated with the following variables:

(a) Demographic and geographic aspects of the current Louisiana physician workforce.

(b) Number and specialty types of physicians currently practicing in Louisiana, including geographic distribution.

(c) Capacity for and number of residents and specialty types of residents training in Louisiana, including geographic distribution.

(d) Capacity for and number of medical students currently in Louisiana.

(e) Number and specialty type of physicians needed to address the health and welfare of the Louisiana population, based on population demographics, Medicaid and commercial health insurance claims analysis, and other sources of information.

(2) Review best practices from other states in determining physician supply and demand.

(3) Make any other additional recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may do all of the following:

(1) Request the assistance of any state agency or any state official in acquiring information or cooperation necessary to fulfilling its duties.

(2) Engage subject matter experts and contract with third parties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following groups, organizations, and agencies shall each appoint a member to the task force who shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing group, organization, or agency:

(1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

(2) A representative from the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

(3) A representative from the Louisiana State Medical Society.

(4) A representative from the Louisiana Hospital Association.

(5) A representative from the Louisiana Board of Regents.

(6) A representative from the Louisiana Association of Health Plans.

(7) A representative from the Louisiana Rural Hospital Association.

(8) A representative from the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry.

(9) The chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans or his designee.

(10) The chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Shreveport or his designee.

(11) The president of Tulane University or his designee.

(12) The president of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine or his designee.

(13) A representative from the University of Queensland-Ochsner Clinical School.

(14) A representative from the Xavier University of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members shall serve without compensation and additional members may be added to the task force at any time upon a majority vote of its members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall provide staff to support the task force required by this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall adopt rules of procedure and shall elect its own chairperson who shall organize the task force and its work and meetings, which shall be made available electronically.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before February 1, 2024, the task force established by this Resolution shall submit to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library a written report of its findings and recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the executive director of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners, the president of the Louisiana State Medical Society, the president of the Louisiana Hospital Association, the chair of the Louisiana Board of Regents, the president of the Louisiana Association of Health Plans, the president of the Louisiana Rural Hospital Association, the president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, the chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans, the chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Shreveport, the president of Tulane University, the president of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, the dean of the University of Queensland-Ochsner Clinical School, and the president of Xavier University of Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE