

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 108

BY SENATOR HEITMEIER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To authorize and direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to submit a request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to extend Louisiana's Section 1115a demonstration waiver (Project No. 11-W-00252/6) for the Greater New Orleans Community Health Connection and to authorize and direct the governor and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals to identify a source or sources for the matching of non-federal funds required under the extended waiver.

WHEREAS, a Section 1115a demonstration waiver (Project No. 11-W-00252/6) for the Greater New Orleans Community Health Connection (GNOCHC waiver) was created in 2010 to continue the expansion of access to primary care services, including mental health care, without regard to a patient's ability to pay, and to develop a medical home model of care, all of which had begun under the post-Katrina Primary Care Access and Stabilization Grant program; and

WHEREAS, clinics funded by the GNOCHC waiver have provided accessible, affordable primary care to approximately five hundred thousand residents in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines; and

WHEREAS, the GNOCHC waiver has substantially improved access to health care, the quality of health care, and the health of the patients and families in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines Parishes; and

WHEREAS, the GNOCHC waiver is more cost effective by prioritizing primary care rather than expensive hospital care, through emphasis on primary care medical homes; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the GNOCHC waiver, the greater New Orleans region now boasts a quality, affordable network of neighborhood based health centers offering primary care and mental health to everyone irrespective of their ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, an external evaluation in 2010 by the Commonwealth Fund reported that although the health centers funded by the GNOCHC waiver cared for people that were on average lower income and suffering from a higher burden of disease than the average American, the evaluation reported better access, satisfaction with health care, and less indebtedness because of health care related expenses; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 the health center network funded by the GNOCHC waiver received an award for quality by the National Committee on Quality Assurance; and

WHEREAS, financial responsibility assessments by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, office of inspector general, have demonstrated a responsible use of funding made available by the GNOCHC waiver; and

WHEREAS, absent an extension, the GNOCHC waiver will expire on December 31, 2013, leaving approximately sixty thousand individuals currently enrolled in GNOCHC without coverage and access to comprehensive primary care and mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has requested that the Department of Health and Hospitals submit a request to extend the GNOCHC waiver no later than June 30, 2013; and

WHEREAS, extension of the GNOCHC waiver would continue the expansion of access to quality primary care, mental health, and other services through a collaborative public-private partnership approach that promotes team-based and innovative health care services.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby authorize and direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to submit a request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to extend the Section 1115a Medicaid demonstration waiver (Project No. 11-W-00252/6) for the Greater New Orleans Community Health Connection for a three year period commencing January 1, 2014, and does hereby authorize and direct the governor and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals to identify a source or sources for the matching of non-federal funds required

under the extended GNOCHC waiver.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor and 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