

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 308

Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care, in cooperation with the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the State Council of Higher Education, to study the organization and effectiveness of state health workforce reform initiatives.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 23, 1995

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 1995

WHEREAS, access to primary health care services is essential for the good health of all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, Virginia currently has an inadequate supply of primary care physicians relative to specialty care physicians; and

WHEREAS, many Virginia localities are experiencing chronic shortages of primary health care providers; and

WHEREAS, the health care system is rapidly evolving toward managed health care delivery systems which require increased numbers of primary health care providers; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has implemented numerous programs to increase the supply of primary health care providers, including (i) the Generalist Initiative for increasing the number of primary care physicians produced by Virginia medical schools, (ii) the Practice Sights Initiative for recruiting and retaining primary health care providers in underserved areas through the use of scholarships, loan repayment programs, provider practice support, and other incentives, (iii) the Area Health Education Centers Program, which supports both the Generalist Initiative and the Practice Sights Initiative through health professions student recruitment and community-based educational programs, (iv) the Office of Rural Health, which supports the Practice Sights Initiative through provider recruitment and retention efforts in rural areas, (v) the Virginia Health Care Foundation, which supports public/private initiatives to recruit and retain primary care providers in underserved areas, and (vi) the Primary Care Cooperative Agreement, which supports primary care needs assessment and planning; and

WHEREAS, these programs involve multiple agencies in both the Education and Health and Human Resources Secretariats, as well as local, federal and private organizations; and

WHEREAS, these programs must be jointly planned and coordinated to address specific needs for primary health care providers in Virginia's local communities; and

WHEREAS, state funding policies for these programs must be based upon careful evaluation of each program and prioritization of the various initiatives; and

WHEREAS, there is no single organization with designated responsibility for coordinating the Commonwealth's health workforce reform initiatives and developing prioritized budget and policy proposals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care, in cooperation with the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the State Council of Higher Education, be directed to study the organization and effectiveness of Virginia's health workforce reform initiatives. The study shall include an evaluation of the need for each program and an assessment of the effectiveness of each program in addressing health workforce needs in the Commonwealth. The study also shall include an evaluation of the most effective organizational structures for (i) conducting a health workforce needs assessment, (ii) coordinating health professions education initiatives with health professions recruitment and retention initiatives, (iii) developing comprehensive budget and policy proposals which integrate the various health workforce reform initiatives and prioritize among individual program goals, and (iv) monitoring progress toward improving the supply of primary health care providers in medically underserved areas.

The Joint Commission on Health Care shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the commission, upon request.

The Joint Commission on Health Care shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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