

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 750 Session of
2004

INTRODUCED BY DeWEESE AND VEON, MAY 25, 2004

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, MAY 25, 2004

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the appointment of a task force to study the
2 recruitment, training and retention of physicians in this
3 Commonwealth, including rural and medically underserved areas
4 of Pennsylvania.

5 WHEREAS, It has been reported that many hospitals and towns
6 in rural areas of this Commonwealth are unable to attract or
7 retain enough physicians; and

8 WHEREAS, Though Pennsylvania contributes Medicaid support for
9 graduate medical education expenses, many of the graduates who
10 receive financial aid through this program appear to not stay to
11 practice in this Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite legislative action over the preceding
13 several years, there continue to be reports that medical
14 malpractice claims and medical malpractice insurance are forcing
15 doctors to leave this Commonwealth; and

16 WHEREAS, There continue to be differing accounts of the
17 number of physicians closing their practices or retiring from
18 their specialties in various areas across this Commonwealth and

1 leaving Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, The health, safety and welfare of the residents of
3 this Commonwealth require a system that provides a stable and
4 reliable physician work force, and difficulty in accessing
5 physician services would constitute an immediate hardship for
6 many Pennsylvania residents; and

7 WHEREAS, In the judgment of the House of Representatives,
8 accurate data is necessary to determine if an emergency exists;
9 therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives establish a task
11 force to conduct an in-depth investigation of the recruitment,
12 training and retention of physicians in this Commonwealth,
13 including rural and medically underserved areas of this
14 Commonwealth; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the task force study this Commonwealth's
16 current policies regarding the recruitment, training and
17 retention of physicians and if these policies could be changed
18 to improve the recruitment, training and retention of physicians
19 in this Commonwealth, including the rural and medically
20 underserved areas of this Commonwealth; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That in conducting the study the task force shall:

22 (1) conduct, summarize and analyze the results of
23 reference searches and studies on the recruitment, training
24 and retention of physicians and study why physicians who are
25 educated, trained or practice in this Commonwealth leave to
26 practice elsewhere;

27 (2) establish the current number of physicians licensed
28 in this Commonwealth, the current number of those currently
29 practicing within this Commonwealth and their place of
30 primary practice, and the number of Pennsylvania licensed

1 physicians who practice entirely outside of this
2 Commonwealth;

3 (3) develop tools that can be used by various boards or
4 departments to track Pennsylvania licensed primary care
5 physicians and nonprimary care physicians, the location of
6 the licensed physician practices and the total percentage of
7 State-licensed physicians that practice within and outside of
8 this Commonwealth;

9 (4) conduct, tabulate and analyze the results of a
10 survey of the public or affected persons and groups relating
11 to physician recruitment, training and retention;

12 (5) develop recommendations to address any current and
13 future physician shortages and distribution issues;

14 (6) develop recommendations to encourage the aspirations
15 of Commonwealth students to seek careers as physicians and to
16 attend medical schools participating in the rural placement
17 programs for physicians;

18 (7) develop recommendations to encourage medical schools
19 accepting medical education reimbursements through Medicaid
20 to accept more Commonwealth students;

21 (8) develop recommendations to expand and improve the
22 physician shortage area program that would place more
23 physicians in rural and underserved areas in this
24 Commonwealth;

25 (9) develop recommendations to expand and improve intern
26 and residency training at existing and new sites in rural and
27 underserved areas for allopathic and osteopathic graduates;
28 and

29 (10) collect and analyze relevant data to establish the
30 most cost-effective and efficient way to attract more

1 physicians to this Commonwealth to establish practices in
2 rural and underserved areas;
3 and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the task force be comprised of the following
5 members:

6 (1) the chairman and the minority chairman of the Health
7 and Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives;

8 (2) the chairman and the minority chairman of the
9 Insurance Committee of the House of Representatives;

10 (3) the Insurance Commissioner;

11 (4) two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives; and

13 (5) two members appointed by the Minority Leader of the
14 House of Representatives; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That members be appointed within 30 days of the
16 adoption of this resolution; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Insurance Commissioner call the initial
18 meeting of the task force, at which meeting the members elect a
19 chairperson; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to hold hearings,
21 take testimony and make its investigations at such places as it
22 deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to issue
24 subpoenas under the hand and seal of its chairperson commanding
25 any person to appear before the task force and to answer
26 questions touching matters properly being inquired into by the
27 task force and to produce such books, papers, records and
28 documents as the task force deems necessary; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That subpoenas be servable upon any person and have
30 the same effect as subpoenas issued out of the courts of this

1 Commonwealth and that any person that willfully neglects or
2 refuses to testify before the task force or to produce any
3 books, papers, records or documents be subject to the penalties
4 provided by the laws of this Commonwealth in such case; and be
5 it further

6 RESOLVED, That each member of the task force have power to
7 administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before
8 the task force; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the task force report to the General Assembly
10 on its activities and findings and make recommendations not
11 later than November 1, 2004; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives make no
13 appropriation to the Health Care Provider Retention Program
14 under Article XIII-A of the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31,
15 No.21), known as the Public Welfare Code, or any similar program
16 until at least 30 days after a report is filed by the task force
17 under this resolution; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the expenses incurred by the task force in
19 carrying out its responsibilities, including per diem and travel
20 expenses incurred by members and regular staff, stenographic
21 charges and other incidental expenses, be paid from appropriate
22 accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk of the House of
23 Representatives; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That within 30 days after the task force has made
25 its report, the chairperson of the task force shall cause a
26 record of all expenses incurred by the members of the task force
27 which are payable at Commonwealth expense to be filed with the
28 Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.