2016 Regular Session

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 173

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

2	To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals not to establish freestanding
3	emergency departments as a type of licensed healthcare facility in this state except,
4	potentially, in limited circumstances specified herein.
5	WHEREAS, a freestanding emergency department is a type of healthcare facility that
6	is structurally separate and distinct from a hospital and provides emergency care; and
7	WHEREAS, as a matter of health and fiscal policy, whether a state should license
8	freestanding emergency departments is a highly controversial issue; and
9	WHEREAS, studies on this issue in states that have considered licensure of
10	freestanding emergency departments consistently find that allowing these facilities to
11	operate would impede the states' efforts to contain healthcare costs; and
12	WHEREAS, in states that allow freestanding emergency departments to operate, the
13	facilities tend to be highly profitable for their owners, generating a large volume of business
14	even when located in close proximity to existing hospital emergency rooms; and
15	WHEREAS, hospital emergency rooms are the costliest healthcare setting in our
16	state's health system; and
17	WHEREAS, because freestanding emergency departments charge higher prices than
18	hospital emergency rooms, allowing freestanding emergency departments to operate in
19	Louisiana would exacerbate the problem of healthcare cost inflation in this state; and
20	WHEREAS, the establishment of freestanding emergency departments would also
21	impede the efforts of this state to better coordinate care for our medically needy population,
22	as these facilities have the potential to induce people to use them for nonemergency
23	conditions in lieu of seeing a primary care physician; and

A RESOLUTION

HR NO. 173 ENROLLED

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize that many rural and urban communities of this state have a critical shortage of healthcare professionals and facilities; therefore, the sense of this legislative body is that establishment of a freestanding emergency department should be considered only for the most medically underserved areas of the state where no other options for delivering health care exist, as demonstrated pursuant to a thorough facility need review process; and

WHEREAS, if this state is to enhance access to care and improve the overall health of our population, strategies for achieving these goals should include provision of greater levels of primary care and development of a robust network of hospital-affiliated clinics in underserved areas rather than establish a new type of licensed healthcare facility that provides costly and potentially unnecessary services.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals not to establish freestanding emergency departments as a type of licensed healthcare facility in this state unless an overwhelming need for such a facility exists in a medically needy community, as demonstrated and documented by a thorough facility need review process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES