

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 6

BY SENATOR BARROW

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on funding solutions for in-home support providers.

WHEREAS, community based in-home support providers are a fundamental component of the health care spectrum as more and more individuals seek community based care as opposed to institutionalization; and

WHEREAS, this provider group has been disproportionately jeopardized by a series of rate reductions and unfunded mandates over the past several years; and

WHEREAS, since 2010, in-home support providers have suffered a 23% rate reduction while other institutional providers have experienced marginal rate reductions or no reductions at all, making the current in-home provider rate less than the provider rate in 2008; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 the Affordable Care Act required in-home support providers to offer health insurance to 95% of agency employees without the provision of state or federal dollars to cover the mandate; and

WHEREAS, also in 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor overtime rule became effective requiring in-home support providers to begin paying overtime rates to their employees without the provision of state or federal dollars to cover the mandate; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that for a mid-size agency, which a majority of in-home support providers are, the costs of implementing these unfunded mandates could be nearly half a million dollars; and

WHEREAS, because of the rate reductions and unfunded mandates, a recent survey by the Supported Living Network documented that nearly three quarters of the three hundred current in-home support providers are facing bankruptcy, closure or elimination within the next six months; and

WHEREAS, this puts employment of thirty thousand direct support workers at risk of unemployment and will leave more than twenty thousand individuals with disabilities and seniors without in-home care, placing them at risk of institutionalization; and

WHEREAS, other provider groups have been much more favored by the department and have not sustained the rate reductions borne by in-home support providers without any regard to this provider group's ability to sustain such rate reductions and unfunded mandates; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Department of Health and Hospitals to ensure that their reimbursement rates are adequate to maintain an appropriate provider network to care for individuals with disabilities and seniors in the community.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on funding solutions for in-home support providers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include data on the rate reductions of in-home support providers versus rate reductions to institutional nursing home providers, by year, since 2008, and should also include data on all of the unfunded mandates being thrust upon this provider group.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include a detailed plan identifying realistic funding strategies and solutions that can be implemented for this provider group and a timeline for implementation to ensure sustainability of the services they provide to the individuals who rely on them the most.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana no later than October 1, 2016.

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

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE