

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 516

By Kurita

A RESOLUTION to create a special commission to study the need to create a new category or categories of caregivers to serve the elderly in nursing homes, assisted living programs and home health care programs.

WHEREAS, the general population of this state and nation is increasing in average age each year due to better health care; and

WHEREAS, as more people live longer, the need for special care for the elderly either in nursing homes, assisted living or home health care programs will increase dramatically; and

WHEREAS, the present nursing home, assisted living and home health care industries are having difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified professional personnel, due to shortages of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified or uncertified personnel in the less skilled areas; and

WHEREAS, the personnel shortage for these industries may reach crisis proportions in the near future unless steps are taken to plan for and meet this critical need; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special commission to study the need for the creation of a new category or categories of licensed or certified caregivers for the elderly to meet the anticipated future staffing needs of the nursing home, assisted living and home health care industries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the commission shall study the implications of creating a new category or categories of licensed or certified caregivers as third party reimbursement and shall develop methodology for working with Congress, DHHS and the other states to assure that public reimbursement through Medicare and Medicaid for services delivered by any new category of caregiver is recognized and incorporated into existing funding plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the need for such new specialties is found to exist, the Commission shall explore the appropriate content of any training programs for such new specialties, and make recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Higher Education Commission and the Commissioner of the Department of Health.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the commission shall consist of six (6) members to be appointed by the Governor, two (2) members of the Senate Committee on General Welfare, Health and Human Resources to be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate, and two (2) members of the House Health and Human Resources Committee to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that of the members appointed by the Governor, one (1) shall be a physician specializing in or practicing in the field of gerontology or geriatric medicine or a related field from a list of at least three (3) nominees submitted by the Tennessee Medical Association; one (1) shall be a registered nurse with experience in the care of the elderly from a list of at least three (3) nominees submitted by the Tennessee Nurses Association; one (1) shall be an academically qualified faculty member at one (1) of the public or private medical schools in the state who teaches in the area of gerontology or diseases and care of the elderly from a

list of at least three (3) nominees submitted jointly by the heads of the participating medical schools; one (1) shall be a licensed physical therapist from a list of at least three (3) nominees submitted by the Tennessee Physical Therapy Association; one (1) shall be a licensed social worker from a list of at least three (3) names submitted by the Tennessee Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers; and one (1) shall be a member of the general public not directly or indirectly connected with professional care of the elderly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Health shall furnish staff support to the commission, and that all appropriate agencies shall provide assistance to the commission upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the commission who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of the commission until the commission reports its findings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the commission shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly; and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair and such other officers as the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the commission shall report its interim findings and recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor no later than February 15, 2003 and its final recommendations no later than February 1, 2004.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor, the Speaker of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the Commissioner of the Department of Health.