

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 183

By Yarbro

A RESOLUTION to encourage the Bureau of TennCare to improve access to and quality of evidence-based home visitation services.

WHEREAS, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has encouraged states to use Section 1115 demonstration projects to address pressing healthcare issues in the states; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based home visiting programs are widely viewed as beneficial and have received the support of the Tennessee Department of Health and other agencies; and

WHEREAS, in this State, there are currently three evidence-based home visiting program models receiving state or federal funding, which include Healthy Families America (Healthy Start), Nurse Family Partnership, and Parents as Teachers; and

WHEREAS, the Medicaid program in this State operates under a Section 1115 waiver as the TennCare program and covers over one million Tennesseans and many births in this State; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based home visitation programs for pregnant women and parents with infants who face medical, social, or environmental risks provide a variety of beneficial services, such as mother and child health and developmental assessments and screenings for co-occurring risk factors, including maternal depression, everyday stress, and domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, the preparation of action plans developed with infant caregivers through such programs that are designed to monitor the progress of an infant's health and development and the family's progress encourage a baby's health, safety, and optimum development; and

WHEREAS, such programs present a variety of educational topics and tools designed to address identified issues and to support family strengths and improve parenting skills; and

WHEREAS, an appropriate federal waiver program could beneficially enhance access in this State to quality evidence-based home visitation services for the babies and their families; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this body encourages the Bureau of TennCare to seek an appropriate Section 1115(a) waiver, or an appropriate amendment to the existing TennCare II Section 1115 waiver, in order to improve access to and quality of evidence-based home visitation services for pregnant women and parents with infants who face medical, social, or environmental risks in order to promote positive health and well-being outcomes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this body further encourages the Bureau of TennCare to utilize otherwise available federal funding, grants, private sector contributions, and any available funds that the State may receive pursuant to a judgment or settlement related to opiate legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for transmittal to the Governor of Tennessee and the Bureau of TennCare.