

Regular Session, 2012

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 96

BY REPRESENTATIVE SIMON

HEALTH SERVICES: Requests a study of means by which to expand access to telehealth services in La.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to study means by which to
3 expand access by Louisianians to telehealth services and to report its findings to the
4 legislative committees on health and welfare.

5 WHEREAS, the term "telemedicine" refers to the use of medical information
6 exchanged from one site to another via electronic communications to improve the health of
7 a patient; and

8 WHEREAS, as an innovative form of health care, telemedicine is extremely valuable
9 because it enhances access to care, particularly in rural locations and other medically
10 underserved areas; makes delivery of care more cost-effective; and distributes limited
11 provider resources more efficiently; and

12 WHEREAS, many patients with limited access to traditional health care can be
13 diagnosed and treated sooner through telemedicine than they would be otherwise, resulting
14 in improved outcomes and less costly treatments due to early detection and prevention; and

15 WHEREAS, Louisiana law, R.S. 37:1271(B)(2), provides that any person authorized
16 to practice telemedicine shall ensure that a licensed health care professional who can
17 adequately examine the patient and diagnose illness is in the examination room with the
18 patient at the time telemedicine services are delivered; and

19 WHEREAS, while requiring the physical presence of a second health care
20 professional with a patient in the practice of telemedicine is important for patient safety and
21 quality of treatment, this requirement also represents a barrier to care for persons who could

1 access a physician quickly through electronic means but could not also access a provider in
2 person at the same time; and

3 WHEREAS, the term "telehealth" encompasses telemedicine as well as other health
4 services which can be provided remotely through communication technologies; and

5 WHEREAS, common examples of telehealth services in practice include primary
6 care, medical specialty consultations, behavioral health services, and home monitoring of
7 chronic disease; and

8 WHEREAS, telehealth services could potentially address a great unmet need for
9 health care by persons who have limited access to both traditional health care settings and
10 to telemedicine as currently defined in Louisiana law; and

11 WHEREAS, if our state is to achieve much needed improvement in health outcomes,
12 a prudent and responsible policy for doing so would be to balance patient safety and access
13 to care through expanding access by Louisianians to telehealth services.

14 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
15 urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to study means by which to expand
16 access by Louisianians to telehealth services.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing the study, the department shall
18 engage, collaborate with, and obtain information and perspective from stakeholder groups
19 with appropriate expertise, including but not limited to the following organizations:

20 (1) The health care services division of the Louisiana State University System.

21 (2) The Tulane University School of Medicine.

22 (3) The Louisiana State Medical Society.

23 (4) The Louisiana Primary Care Association.

24 (5) The Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum.

25 (6) The HomeCare Association of Louisiana.

26 (7) The Louisiana Hospital Association.

27 (8) The Louisiana Association of Health Plans.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall provide the findings of this
29 study in the form of a report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the Senate
30 Committee on Health and Welfare on or before December 31, 2012.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
2 secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, the president of the Louisiana State
3 University System, the dean of the Tulane University School of Medicine, the president of
4 the Louisiana State Medical Society, the executive director of the Louisiana Primary Care
5 Association, and the executive director of the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Simon

HCR No. 96

Requests the Dept. of Health and Hospitals to study means by which to expand access by Louisianians to telehealth services and to report its findings to the legislative committees on health and welfare.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill.

1. Added the following as organizations which the Dept. of Health and Hospitals shall engage in developing the requested study:
 - (a) The HomeCare Association of La.
 - (b) The La. Hospital Association.
 - (c) The La. Association of Health Plans.