

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18

2 INTRODUCED BY K. GILLAN

3

4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE NEEDS AND STRATEGIES
6 FOR MEETING THOSE NEEDS.

7

8 WHEREAS, the health and welfare of all Montanans depends on their access to health care providers
9 and health care services; and

10 WHEREAS, a well-trained and well-educated health care workforce is critical to the health and well-being
11 of Montanans and the Montana economy; and

12 WHEREAS, 54 of Montana's 56 counties are designated in whole or in part as health professional
13 shortage areas, medically underserved areas, or medically underserved populations; and

14 WHEREAS, the population of Montana is projected to grow 21% between 2000 and 2020, resulting in
15 a corresponding increase in the demand for health care professionals; and

16 WHEREAS, access to medical treatment is threatened in many communities, particularly those in rural
17 and frontier areas, due to a lack of health care providers, such as dentists, physicians, physician assistants, and
18 advanced practice registered nurses; and

19 WHEREAS, the Montana physician workforce ranks second nationwide in the number of physicians over
20 age 65, less than 25% of physicians practice outside of the state's 7 largest cities, and 8 of the 56 counties have
21 no physician; and

22 WHEREAS, the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration projects that Montana will have
23 3,000 fewer registered nurses than needed by 2020; and

24 WHEREAS, many communities, especially those in rural and frontier areas, also report a shortage of and
25 an aging workforce of allied health care professionals, including laboratory technicians, medical technicians, and
26 other health professionals; and

27 WHEREAS, the health care sector provides highly paid, highly skilled careers in large and small
28 communities across the state and is critically important to the state's economic growth; and

29 WHEREAS, the state lacks a comprehensive strategy for developing the supply of health care
30 professionals necessary to meet the future medical needs of Montana.

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 STATE OF MONTANA:

3 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to
4 section 5-5-217, MCA, to:

5 (1) examine Montana's health care workforce needs by:

6 (a) reviewing existing analyses of Montana's current health care workforce;

7 (b) reviewing projections related to future health care workforce trends and needs; and

8 (c) monitoring the ongoing work and final recommendations of the state entities that have received a
9 federal Health Care Workforce Development Planning Grant to consider the state's long-term needs for health
10 care workers;

11 (2) in order to ensure that the supply of health care professionals and health care workers is adequate
12 to meet the projected demand, recommend a comprehensive 10-year plan for expanding health care professions
13 and health care workforce training programs in a manner that incorporates the recommendations of state and
14 national entities that have been reviewing and considering workforce needs; and

15 (3) develop legislative proposals to begin implementation of the 10-year health care workforce
16 development plan for consideration by the 63rd Montana Legislature.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study consider and that the 10-year health care workforce
18 development plan address ways to:

19 (1) develop public-private partnerships to expand workforce training opportunities;

20 (2) expand health care workforce training opportunities through the Montana University System;

21 (3) expand distance-learning opportunities for persons not located near a training program;

22 (4) expand the number of primary care residency program training positions in Montana, in recognition
23 of the fact that nearly 70% of medical residents practice near the location of their residency program;

24 (5) increase participation in multistate medical education programs, including methods to encourage
25 Montana medical students who take part in those programs to return to Montana to practice medicine;

26 (6) create a loan repayment program for allied health care professionals similar to the Montana Rural
27 Physician Incentive Program;

28 (7) expand training and recruitment programs for oral health professionals; and

29 (8) further the recommendations of the Initiative on the Future of Nursing, undertaken jointly by the
30 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Institute of Medicine, to address nursing workforce issues of supply,

1 recruitment, and retention.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study involve or gather input from representatives of health care
3 provider and consumer organizations, the Montana University System, the Montana Office of Rural Health, the
4 Montana Area Health Education Centers, the Office of Public Instruction, the Department of Labor and Industry's
5 health care licensure boards, and other interested parties.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
7 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2012.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
9 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 63rd Legislature.

10 - END -