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SJR-7 Medical residency programs. (2015-2016)

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 7

CHAPTER 90

Relative to physicians.

[Filed with Secretary of State July 01, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 7, Pan. Medical residency programs.

This measure would urge the Congress and the President of the United States to renew funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration's Teaching Health Center and Primary Care Residency Expansion Graduate Medical Education Programs, and to lift the freeze on residency positions funded by Medicare to expand physician supply and improve access to health care.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, According to a 2014 report by the California Healthcare Foundation, although California has more than 105,000 licensed physicians, only 71,000 are actively involved in providing patient care; and

WHEREAS, Certain regions of the state, such as the San Joaquin Valley and the Inland Empire, lack the recommended supply of primary care and specialty physicians and, as a result, those areas have higher populations in poor health; and

WHEREAS, California's shortage and poor distribution of physicians is likely to be exacerbated by increased levels of insured patients and projected increases in the number of physicians planning to retire; and

WHEREAS, Federal funding levels for residency training programs have been frozen since 1997, while California's population has increased by more than 10 percent since that time; and

WHEREAS, Medicare's rigid payment formulas for graduate medical education do not allow for the innovation needed to improve medical education to produce physicians with the appropriate training needed to meet the nation's current and future health care needs; and

WHEREAS, California has been able to address only a minimal portion of primary care residency programs' funding shortfall with state funds; and

WHEREAS, Many primary care physicians, including those who have graduated from California medical schools, want to train in California, but are forced to leave the state because of the shortage in training slots at residency programs; and

WHEREAS, California has the highest retention rate of physicians who complete their residency training in-state; and

WHEREAS, Increasing funding for primary care medical residency training programs is a critical step in addressing the physician shortage problem and improving access to medical care; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature calls upon Congress and the President of the United States to renew funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration's Teaching Health Center and Primary Care Residency Expansion Graduate Medical Education Programs that are set to expire this year; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature calls upon Congress and the President to lift the freeze on residency positions funded by Medicare to expand physician supply and improve access to care; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature calls upon Congress and the President to encourage the development of primary care physician training programs in ambulatory, community, and medically underserved sites through new funding methodologies and incentives; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.