By: Shapleigh S.C.R. No. 14

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases
has been one of the major public health achievements of the last
century, but vigilance against medical contagion remains a
necessity and requires the nation to address problems that recently
have constricted rates of childhood inoculation; and

WHEREAS, During the first half of 2001, national shortages were evident among vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, rubella, mumps, and varicella, from among the diseases for which immunization is required of Texas schoolchildren by Section 38.001, Education Code, or by rules of the Texas Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, Supply problems likewise existed for vaccines for measles and pneumococcal infection, and the national situation, while it has since improved, continues to be subject to the threats of localized shortages or delays in vaccine delivery to health providers; and

WHEREAS, Legal obstacles also have hindered childhood vaccination efforts; the federal Vaccines for Children program covers young people up to 18 years old who are eligible for Medicaid or meet other specified criteria, but in Texas the plan does not cover enrollees in the state's Children's Health Insurance Program because of the choice of a separate state health plan rather than a Medicaid expansion; and

WHEREAS, Another inconsistency concerns the federal Employee

- 1 Retirement Income Security Act because the benefit provisions of
- 2 that Act fail to give coverage to the entire list of vaccines as
- 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
- 4 that counsels the United States Department of Health and Human
- 5 Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- 6 WHEREAS, Vaccination deficiencies have impacts at the state
- 7 and local levels, yet much of the requisite solution to the problem
- 8 resides within the purview of our elected officials in Washington;
- 9 now, therefore, be it
- 10 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
- 11 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to take
- 12 steps to address the vaccine supply shortage with respect to
- 13 childhood immunization schedules; and, be it further
- 14 RESOLVED, That the congress pass legislation to require
- 15 health plans under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act to
- 16 cover all recommended vaccines of the Advisory Committee on
- 17 Immunization Practices; and, be it further
- 18 RESOLVED, That the congress eliminate the inconsistency that
- 19 allows Medicaid children to be eligible for the Vaccines for
- 20 Children program but denies eligibility in some cases to enrollees
- 21 in the state's Children's Health Insurance Program; and, be it
- 22 further
- 23 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
- 24 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
- 25 the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of
- 26 representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
- 27 members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request

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- 1 that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional
- 2 Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of
- 3 America.