

By: Nelson

S.C.R. No. 1

1 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, As the largest of the 48 contiguous states and  
3 ranking second only to California in terms of population, the State  
4 of Texas faces unique challenges to providing adequate access to  
5 primary health care for its residents; and

6 WHEREAS, As of September of 2006, 113 Texas counties, home to  
7 more than 3 million Texans, were designated as primary care health  
8 professional shortage areas by the United States Department of  
9 Health and Human Services; under related federal standards, an even  
10 larger portion of the state qualifies as medically underserved,  
11 with 177 entire Texas counties and parts of 47 other counties  
12 receiving that designation; and

13 WHEREAS, Working through a cooperative agreement with the  
14 federal Health Resources and Services Administration, the Texas  
15 Primary Care Office has as its mission the improvement of access to  
16 medical, dental, and mental health care services for the state's  
17 underserved populations by recruiting and retaining primary care  
18 providers to practice in federally designated shortage areas; and

19 WHEREAS, Similarly, the federal National Health Service  
20 Corps works with educational institutions, students, professional  
21 organizations, clinicians, and underserved communities around the  
22 nation to deliver primary health care, including dental, mental,  
23 and behavioral health care, by developing innovative solutions to  
24 improve recruitment, preparation, and retention of health

1 professionals; and

2 WHEREAS, The National Health Service Corps Ambassador  
3 Program seeks to accomplish these goals by engaging university- and  
4 community-based volunteers to link students and clinicians with  
5 employment opportunities in underserved communities that match  
6 their career interests, to prepare and train students and  
7 clinicians to work in health professional shortage areas by  
8 connecting them to clinical rotations, and to mentor students and  
9 clinicians with one-on-one counseling to maintain interest and  
10 commitment to serving the underserved; and

11 WHEREAS, Although the Texas Primary Care Office is the Texas  
12 liaison with the National Health Service Corps, currently there is  
13 no formal connection between the office and the National Health  
14 Service Corps Ambassador Program; clearly, the state would benefit  
15 from a coordination of effort between the program and the primary  
16 care office, bringing much-needed additional resources to the areas  
17 of Texas that remain underserved by health care professionals; now,  
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
20 hereby encourage the National Health Service Corps Ambassador  
21 Program to coordinate with the Primary Care Office at the Texas  
22 Department of State Health Services; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward an  
24 official copy of this resolution to the secretary of the United  
25 States Department of Health and Human Services, the chair of the  
26 National Advisory Council on the National Health Service Corps, and  
27 the commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services.