

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, During the transition from childhood to adulthood,
2 adolescents often fail to receive regular primary health care
3 screenings and treatment that could greatly improve their current
4 and future health; and

5 WHEREAS, Many adolescents are adversely affected by serious
6 health and safety issues, such as motor vehicle crashes, violence,
7 and substance abuse; they also struggle to adopt behaviors that
8 could decrease their risk of developing chronic diseases in
9 adulthood--behaviors such as eating nutritiously, engaging in
10 physical activity, and choosing not to use tobacco; a number of
11 environmental factors, such as family, peer group, school, and
12 community characteristics, contribute to the challenges that
13 adolescents face; and

14 WHEREAS, Adolescence is a critical time for developing
15 positive habits and skills that can lead to healthy behaviors over
16 an individual's lifetime; the Institute of Medicine and the
17 National Research Council conducted a study that found that one
18 important factor in designing an adolescent health service is the
19 focus on prevention of disease; one of the conclusions of the study
20 was that "prevention, early intervention and timely treatment
21 improve the health status for adolescents, prepare them for healthy
22 adulthood, and decrease the incidence of many chronic diseases in
23 adulthood"; and

24 WHEREAS, In the past few years, immunizations have been

1 licensed to provide protection for teens against such illnesses as
2 meningococcal infections, pertussis, or whooping cough, and
3 cervical cancer; the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
4 specifically recommends the use of FDA-approved vaccines for
5 pertussis, tetanus, and meningitis, in adolescents; a national
6 survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
7 (CDC) found, however, that immunization coverage levels among
8 adolescents in 2006 failed to meet the Healthy People 2010
9 objective of 90 percent coverage for youth aged 13 through 15 for
10 any of the vaccines measured; and

11 WHEREAS, Numerous organizations have emphasized the
12 importance of routine screenings and inoculations in promoting the
13 health of adolescents; the Society for Adolescent Medicine has
14 found that adolescent well physicals are one of the most effective
15 of preventive care tools for ensuring continued health from
16 childhood to adulthood and that adolescents who regularly visit a
17 primary care physician are less likely to visit emergency rooms and
18 have preventable hospitalizations and are more likely to receive
19 recommended immunizations and other evidence-based health care
20 services; and

21 WHEREAS, The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
22 is the agency responsible for the implementation of the Adolescent
23 Health Program, which maintains a comprehensive and holistic view
24 of adolescents' health and well-being and provides information on
25 adolescent health through consultation, technical assistance, and
26 educational presentations to local, state, public, and private
27 agencies; in addition, DSHS is the agency that houses the Texas

1 Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program, the
2 Texas Asthma Control Program, the Immunization Branch, and the
3 School Health Program, all of which have a significant, positive
4 impact on the health and well-being of adolescent Texans; and

5 WHEREAS, The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides education
6 to children and parents about healthy practices and behaviors
7 through the curriculum it requires for health, fitness, and life
8 skills courses, as well as through the activity of the TEA Division
9 of Health and Safety, which provides coordination, leadership,
10 policy development, and implementation assistance for specific
11 state and federal requirements and programs that emphasize
12 providing students with opportunities to achieve their maximum
13 potential for a safe and healthy lifestyle; and

14 WHEREAS, Additionally, the Health Resources and Services
15 Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
16 has developed, in conjunction with the American Academy of
17 Pediatricians, the Bright Futures initiative, which provides a set
18 of guidelines for adolescent care, including recommendations on
19 immunizations and routine health screenings; for its part, the CDC
20 has launched a national campaign to raise awareness about
21 adolescent health and immunizations; and

22 WHEREAS, Parents' awareness of the need for adolescent well
23 visits is a crucial factor in determining whether their children
24 receive routine health care and preventive treatment; now,
25 therefore, be it

26 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
27 hereby express its support of efforts to improve adolescent health

1 by educating parents about the fundamental importance of
2 adolescents' receiving regular physical exams and updated
3 immunizations; and, be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the legislature direct the Texas Department of
5 State Health Services and the Texas Education Agency and all other
6 state agencies that provide information, services, or support to
7 adolescent Texans or their parents to seek out opportunities to
8 educate them as to the importance of these exams and of acquiring
9 recommended immunizations and the positive impact that these
10 measures will have on adolescents' long-term health and well-being;
11 and, be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward an
13 official copy of this resolution to the commissioner of the Texas
14 Department of State Health Services and the commissioner of
15 education.

Davis of Harris
Hopson
Gutierrez

H.C.R. No. 88

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.C.R. No. 88 was adopted by the House on April 15, 2009, by a non-record vote.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.C.R. No. 88 was adopted by the Senate on May 11, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor