

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 941

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize Central Health, CommUnityCare, and The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing for their valuable efforts to address the shortage of primary health care providers through the creation of a family nurse practitioner residency program; and

WHEREAS, Texas is experiencing an acute shortage of primary care providers, especially in community health care settings; federally qualified health centers such as CommUnityCare, which has 20 health center sites in Travis County, participate in residency programs to train physicians, but nurse practitioners, who are also critically important providers of primary care, have traditionally not had the benefit of postgraduate residency training programs; and

WHEREAS, Community Health Center, Incorporated, a federally qualified health center in Connecticut, developed the first United States residency program to train family nurse practitioners so that they are better prepared as new primary care providers to handle the many challenges presented by patients who seek care at federally qualified health centers; and

WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing is the major center of nursing education and scholarship in Texas and is ranked among the top 20 nursing master's degree programs in the nation, with an enrollment of almost 700 students; and

WHEREAS, CommUnityCare provides comprehensive primary care services and served as a medical home to almost 59,000 individuals during Fiscal Year 2010; and

WHEREAS, The Travis County Healthcare District, which does business as Central Health, is a hospital district created in 2004 and is responsible for providing or arranging for the provision of health care to eligible residents of the district, with the mission of creating access to health care for those who need it most; and

WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, CommUnityCare, and Central Health have collaborated to create a residency program for family nurse practitioners that is among the first such programs in the United States and under which the residents will receive training while providing health care services to CommUnityCare patients so that the residents can continue to work toward their goal of becoming highly trained and skilled primary care providers; and

WHEREAS, CommUnityCare will administer the residency program and provide preceptors who will serve as teachers and mentors for the residents; The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing will help recruit students for the program; and Central Health will provide funding for the program; and

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WHEREAS, Members of the first class of residents will begin their one-year training program in the fall of 2011 and will each make a commitment to continue practicing in community health care settings after the conclusion of their residencies, resulting in additional primary care capacity in our communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, hereby commend CommUnityCare, The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, and Central Health for creating a family nurse practitioner residency program that is among the first in the nation and is designed to help alleviate the critical shortage of primary care providers in this state and extend to the program's preceptors, staff, and residents sincere best wishes for success; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for CommUnityCare, The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, and Central Health as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Watson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 9, 2011.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate