

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R8540 MKS-D

H.C.R. 84
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Health & Human Services
5/2/2001
Engrossed

DIGEST

Federally funded community-based safety-net programs play a significant role in the delivery of medical care and related services to the large number of Americans who cannot afford health insurance. Texas' large size and shared border with Mexico are geographical factors that present the state with unique challenges in serving its residents and increase the importance of all types of safety-net health care programs, and a large number of Texas counties are federally designated as medically underserved areas. These medically underserved areas are characterized by a high percentage of elderly residents, high poverty rates, high infant mortality rates, and a lower ratio of primary care providers than the national average, and these areas typically serve working poor, minority members, foreign born, or noncitizens who rely on community-based safety-net programs for medical care. Community health centers are a cost-effective way to provide primary and preventive care to populations lacking medical care and can reduce the inappropriate use of emergency rooms and hospitalizations. Increasing the number of community health centers would be a benefit for those Texans living in poor and underserved communities as well as for Texas' noncitizen residents who are uninsured by providing greater access to regular sources of both primary and care and preventive health services and allowing medical services to target common health problems in these populations.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.C.R. 27 submits the following resolutions:

Provides that the 77th Legislature respectfully requests the Congress of the United States to expand the number of and funding for federally funded community health centers and other federal community-based safety-net programs specifically directed to poor and medically underserved communities in states with the highest numbers of uninsured residents. Provides that copies of this resolution be forwarded by the secretary of state to certain federal officials.