

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
80R1881 CME-D

S.C.R. 1  
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Health & Human Services  
2/16/2007  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Texas' inability to provide adequate access to primary health care for its residents is clear with 113 counties designated as primary care health professional shortage areas, and 177 entire counties and parts of 41 other counties designated as underserved areas, as of September 1, 2006.

The Texas Primary Care Office is working through a cooperative agreement with the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, and has as its mission the improvement of access to medical, dental, and mental health care services for the state's underserved populations by recruiting and retaining primary care providers to practice in federally designated shortage areas.

Similarly, the federal National Health Service Corps (NHSC) works with educational institutions, students, professional organizations, clinicians, and underserved communities around the nation to deliver primary health care, including dental, mental and behavioral health care, by developing innovative solutions to improve recruitment, preparation, and retention of health professionals.

To assist with the aforementioned goals, NHSC created the Ambassador Program (program) to engage university-based and community-based volunteers to link students and clinicians with employment opportunities in underserved communities that match their career interests, to prepare and train students and clinicians to work in health professional shortage areas by connecting them to serving the underserved.

As proposed, S.C.R. 1 supports that a benefit will come forth with the coordination of effort between the program and the Texas Primary Care Office, since much needed additional resources will be allocated to the areas of Texas that remain underserved by health care professionals. Currently, the Texas Primary Care Office is the Texas liaison with the NHSC, but no formal connection exists between the program and the office.

### **RESOLVED**

That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully encourage the National Health Services Corps Ambassador Program to coordinate with the Primary Care Office at the Texas Department of State Health Services; and, that the Texas secretary of state forward an official copy of this resolution to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the chair of the National Advisory Council on the National Health Services corps, and the commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services.