

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 104

BY SENATORS MCPHERSON, LONG, RISER AND SMITH

A RESOLUTION

To express support for consolidation of inpatient and outpatient services at Huey P. Long Medical Center to create a sustainable and economically feasible model, and to urge and request the governor, the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals to take all actions necessary to streamline services and create a fiscally responsible, viable public medical center in central Louisiana capable of continuing its integral role in health workforce training and delivery of high quality direct patient care.

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Long Medical Center provides important services vital to the health of many residents living in central Louisiana as well as serving as a referral facility; and

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Long Medical Center has a long and distinguished history as an excellent training facility for many medical residents, nurses and allied health professionals preparing them eventually to practice in the underserved rural parishes of central Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Long Medical Center includes a sixty bed acute care hospital that had two thousand three hundred thirteen adult and pediatric admissions, four hundred fifty-four psychiatric admissions and thirty six thousand five hundred sixty-four emergency department encounters as well as an extensive array of outpatient primary care and specialty clinics that delivered eighty-seven thousand one hundred sixty-one thousand outpatient encounters in 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Long Medical Center in Pineville has an estimated economic impact of \$135 million annually and employs five hundred twenty-eight full time equivalent positions; and

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Long Medical Center in Pineville has continuously

provided quality medical care to the indigent and uninsured populations of the nine-parish region covering central Louisiana since 1939, when the original hospital structure was opened, and continues to serve vital patient care functions more than seventy years later; and

WHEREAS, inpatient services for the Huey P. Long Medical Center are provided at the facility located at 352 Hospital Boulevard, Pineville, while the vast majority of outpatient services are now provided at a separate facility located at England Airpark at 2351 Vandenburg Drive, Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the condition of the Huey P. Long Medical Center located at 352 Hospital Boulevard, Pineville has been determined to be inadequate for long term operation of hospital services; and

WHEREAS, the facility that LSU leases located at 2351 Vandenburg Drive, Alexandria from the England Economic and Industrial Development District is a former military hospital and has been maintained in good physical condition; and

WHEREAS, funding for construction of a replacement hospital for Huey P. Long Medical Center was first contemplated in the state's capital outlay construction bill in 2001 without subsequent progress toward construction; and

WHEREAS, current state debt limits, coupled with the state's multi-year economic outlook, restrict the ability of the state to fund the construction of a new hospital; and

WHEREAS, the governor and public policy organizations encourage local solutions tailored to local health care challenges; and

WHEREAS, the England Economic and Industrial Development District was statutorily created as a political division of the state encompassing the territory of Rapides Parish, enabling it to accept title from the United States of America to the property included in the England Air Force Base and utilizing that and other property, and all assistance available from the federal government and all other sources, to replace and enhance the economic benefits generated by the former air base with diversified activities, including health care; and

WHEREAS, the England Economic and Industrial Development District desires to renovate the building currently leased by LSU for clinic purposes as appropriate to create a full service in-patient hospital that will replace the outdated Huey P. Long Medical Center

in Pineville as well as to renovate a building across the street from the hospital to serve LSU outpatient services needs; and

WHEREAS, by consolidation into one location and renovation, the England Airpark hospital would allow LSU to offer patients private and semi-private rooms instead of three to five bed wards, thereby enhancing patient confidentiality and privacy and improving patient access to care with all services on one campus; and

WHEREAS, eliminating duplicate departments resulting in staff reductions, improving bed utilization, reducing maintenance expenditures that continue to increase in an antiquated building, and eliminating cost of maintaining two campuses would provide the revenue stream necessary for LSU to make lease payments for the proposed facilities; and

WHEREAS, LSU could improve efficiencies and patient safety by eliminating staff time lost in commuting between two campuses, improving patient flow within the facility, improving environmental controls and improving security; and

WHEREAS, consolidating services at the England Airpark would improve LSU's ability to recruit and retain needed physicians and other related staff in a medically underserved region and provide a modern facility to meet the stringent requirements for medical education; and

WHEREAS, locating the Huey P. Long Hospital at the England Airpark would complement the state's emergency response capability by having a facility that can provide medical surge needs for statewide evacuees by locating near an airstrip capable of landing C-130 military transport planes and in close proximity to the new statewide Critical Transportation Need and Medical Special Needs Shelter.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express support for consolidation of inpatient and outpatient services at Huey P. Long Medical Center to create a sustainable and economically feasible model, and to urge and request the governor, the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, to take all actions necessary to streamline services and create a fiscally responsible, viable public medical center in central Louisiana capable of continuing its integral role in health workforce training and delivery of high quality direct patient care.

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ENROLLED

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor, the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, and the chairman of the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE