

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the Governor to request the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services to designate people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as a medically underserved population in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

WHEREAS, the federal government defines "medically underserved populations" according to a formula that weighs a population's lack of primary care providers, its experience with poverty, increased infant mortality, and its percentage of people age 65 and older; and

WHEREAS, as a population, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities meet most of these criteria; and

WHEREAS, research shows that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience significant health disparities, poorer health, poorer health outcomes, higher prevalence of adverse, chronic, and secondary conditions, a lack of access to care, higher poverty rates, and increased mortality; and

WHEREAS, the issue lies in the fact that the designation as a medically underserved population requires that the group occupies the same neighborhood, community, census tract, or geographic area; and

WHEREAS, this requirement prevents individuals with disabilities from receiving medically underserved population designation because 40 years of civil rights advocacy, anti-discrimination laws, and court decisions have been dedicated to their integration into their communities throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, designation as a medically underserved population allows individuals access to a multitude of programs, services, funding streams, and benefits at the federal, state, and local levels; and

WHEREAS, specifically, the designation can offer eligibility to apply for special federal funding, grants, and waivers; grants from the federal government, state governments, private foundations, and nongovernmental organizations that give funding

preferences to those working with this population; loan repayment programs and higher reimbursement rates for providers serving this population; and funding of targeted research that focuses on this population; and

WHEREAS, consequently, the lack of a medically underserved population designation excludes individuals with disabilities from countless programs, services, funding streams, and benefits; and

WHEREAS, most of the requirements for this designation date back to the 1960s and 1970s; however, in 1986, Congress added a provision that allows a governor to request the designation of a population within his or her state from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services under certain circumstances, a process known as the Governor's Exceptional Medically Underserved Population; and

WHEREAS, this process allows designation for unique circumstances and populations that do not fit the conventional definition or rating system for the determination of medically underserved populations; and

WHEREAS, a medically underserved population designation would be a significant step towards addressing the unmet health needs in this population and would officially recognize people with disabilities as stakeholders in their own healthcare, entitled to concrete actions to decrease their health disparities, improve their health, and reduce barriers to their health care;

NOW, THEREFORE,

***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:***

➔Section 1. The General Assembly acknowledges the significant health disparities experienced by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and recognizes the benefits that could be realized with federal designation as a medically underserved population.

➔Section 2. The General Assembly strongly urges the Governor to request the

Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services to designate people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as a medically underserved population in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to send a copy of this Resolution to Representative Tom Burch, Capitol Annex room 332, for delivery.