

MINUTES
HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATIVE
TASK FORCE

April 5, 2016

The Health Reform Legislative Task Force met Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in Committee Room A of the Big MAC Building, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Senate Health Reform Task Force Members Attending: Senators Jim Hendren, Chair; Cecile Bledsoe, Vice Chair; Linda Chesterfield, John Cooper, Jonathan Dismang, Keith Ingram, and Jason Rapert.

House Health Reform Task Force Members Attending: Representatives Charlie Collins, Chair; Reginald Murdock, Vice Chair; Deborah Ferguson, Michelle Gray, Kim Hammer, and David Meeks.

Non Legislative Members Attending: Gregory Bledsoe, M.D., Arkansas Surgeon General.

Other Legislators Attending: Senators David Burnett, Eddie Cheatham, Alan Clark, Joyce Elliott, Missy Irvin, Blake Johnson, Uvalde Lindsey, Larry Teague, and Eddie Joe Williams. Representatives Charles Armstrong, Bob Ballinger, Camille Bennett, Mary Bentley, Ken Bragg, Jana Della Rosa, Lance Eads, Les Eaves, Jon Eubanks, Kenneth Ferguson, David Fielding, Charlene Fite, Bill Gossage, Michael John Gray, Justin Harris, Ken Henderson, Grant Hodges, Monte Hodges, Sheilla Lampkin, Robin Lundstrum, Julie Mayberry, Ron McNair, Micah Neal, Milton Nicks, Jr., Rebecca Petty, Mathew Pitsch, James Ratliff, Marcus Richmond, Laurie Rushing, Sue Scott, James Sorvillo, Dan Sullivan, Brent Talley, DeAnn Vaught, John Walker, and Dave Wallace.

Call to Order & Comments by the Chairs

Senator Jim Hendren called the meeting to order, and stated that the DiamondCare drafted legislation will be heard today after The Stephen Group (TSG) presents an updated report.

The Stephen Group (TSG) Update (*Handout #1*)

Stephen Palmer, and Sheila Cooper, Senior Consultants with The Stephen Group (TSG), presented the TSG update report. This brief update discussed:

- ◆ The impact of the Private Option on state funds and hospital uncompensated care
- ◆ The impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on Arkansas Health Care providers
- ◆ Hospital closures in relation to Medicaid expansion

Members of the Task Force and other members of the General Assembly asked for more information about the following issues:

- ◆ **Representative Kim Hammer:** Are the vulnerable hospitals located close to stable hospitals that could absorb the patient load, if the vulnerable hospitals had to close down?
- ◆ **Representative Charlie Collins:** Please furnish a map of Arkansas that shows the location (include the names of the towns) of the 19 vulnerable hospitals.

Mr. Palmer agreed to research and provide this information.

Discussion of DiamondCare Draft Legislation with Responses from the Department of Human Services (DHS), and The Stephen Group (TSG) (*Handout #2*)

Representatives Michelle Gray and Deborah Ferguson, Senator Missy Irvin, presented for DiamondCare. Representative Gray stated that the proposed DiamondCare legislation is just a draft so the sponsors of this legislation are open to recommendations.

Representatives Gray and Ferguson, and Senator Irvin presented in detail the major points of this legislation. Representative Gray noted that this is a value-based purchasing strategy,¹ and this legislation contains lots of oversight. Mark White, Deputy Director with DHS, and Stephen Palmer and Sheila Cooper, Senior Consultants with The Stephen Group, volunteered information and comments for clarification.

Other Business

Senator Hendren thanked everyone for their participation and announced the scheduled meetings and their times for tomorrow, April 6, 2016, the first day of the Special Session.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30p.m.

¹ Value-Based Purchasing Strategy – “A broad set of payment strategies that link financial incentives to the healthcare delivery performance of a healthcare provider on a set of defined performance measures that are designed to improve quality or reduce costs, or both.”