

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2021-008

REQUESTING THAT THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ESTABLISH A SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION TO MEET JOINTLY WITH A SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION FORMED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ORDER TO STUDY THE ISSUES RELATED TO GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS AND THE NEED TO INCREASE PHYSICIAN RESIDENCY TRAINING SLOTS IN ARKANSAS.

WHEREAS, a stable and dependable healthcare workforce is essential to maintain the state's health system and economy; and

WHEREAS, physicians, physician's assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, therapists, behavioral health professionals, and other allied health professionals play a critical role in ensuring that all Arkansans receive quality health care; and

WHEREAS, all indicators are clear that demand for and utilization of the services provided by medical professionals will only increase over time; and

WHEREAS, it is projected that the State of Arkansas will need at least five hundred (500) additional primary care physicians and a sizable increase in the number of cancer, cardiology, neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatric, emergency medicine, pulmonary, surgical, and other specialists by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the state's medical schools are currently training more graduates than existing available residency slots; and

WHEREAS, in-state medical school enrollment has increased since 2016 and is expected to increase over the next five (5) years; and

WHEREAS, even with the growth of in-state medical school enrollment, Arkansas is still projected to suffer from a shortfall of trained physicians for the foreseeable future; and

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WHEREAS, numerous studies have shown that the greatest predictor of where medical professionals will establish their practices is where they complete their residencies; and

WHEREAS, in a 2019 Association of American Medical Colleges report, Arkansas ranked fourth in the nation for retaining physicians who completed medical school and residency training in the state behind Hawaii, California, and Texas; and

WHEREAS, Medicare-supported residency slots have been capped since 1997, resulting in an unequal distribution of federally supported residency slots to rural states, which disproportionately affects growing states, including Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, recent federal legislation and actions have helped to provide one thousand (1,000) new Medicare-supported slots for the first time in nearly twenty-five (25) years; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has not undertaken a comprehensive study of the issues surrounding undergraduate medical education, graduate medical education, residency programs, and clinical fellowships in recent years; and

WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to study these and other issues pertaining to the need for state-supported graduate medical education to supplement efforts in state medical schools and hospitals; to identify ways to support graduate medical education within the state; to identify ways to retain more Arkansas-educated and trained physicians; and to determine the best, most efficient means to fund these efforts,

NOW THEREFORE,
BE IT PROPOSED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION OF THE NINETY-THIRD
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate Committee on Education and House Committee on Education are each encouraged to establish a Subcommittee on Graduate Medical

1 Education, which shall meet jointly and be composed of a total of six (6)
2 members recommended by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education and the
3 Chair of the House Committee on Education.

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5 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the President Pro Tempore of the Senate is
6 encouraged to designate one (1) of the members appointed to the Subcommittee
7 on Graduate Medical Education by the Chair of the Senate Committee on
8 Education to serve as cochair of the subcommittee and the Speaker of the
9 House of Representatives is encouraged to designate one (1) of the members
10 appointed to the subcommittee by the Chair of the House Committee on
11 Education to serve as cochair of the subcommittee.

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13 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the Senate Subcommittee on Graduate Medical
14 Education and the House Subcommittee on Graduate Medical Education are
15 encouraged to jointly undertake a study of the conditions, needs, and issues
16 related to graduate medical education and the findings within this proposal
17 and recommend any actions or legislation that the subcommittees deem
18 necessary or appropriate.

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20 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the Senate Subcommittee on Graduate Medical
21 Education and the House Subcommittee on Graduate Medical Education are
22 encouraged to conduct meetings as they may deem necessary or convenient to
23 enable them to fully and effectively exercise their powers, perform their
24 duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes described in this
25 proposal.

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27 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT if the Senate Subcommittee on Graduate Medical
28 Education and the House Subcommittee on Graduate Medical Education are
29 formed, the members serving on each of the subcommittees shall be eligible to
30 receive the allowances authorized for legislative members of interim
31 legislative committees, but shall not receive such allowances for more than a
32 total of five (5) days unless authorized by the President Pro Tempore of the
33 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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35 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the funds necessary to form each of the suggested
36 subcommittees and carry out the recommended functions of each of the

1 subcommittees shall come from the funds appropriated to the Senate and the
2 House of Representatives, and in the event that the Senate Subcommittee on
3 Graduate Medical Education and the House Subcommittee on Graduate Medical
4 Education make a report of their findings and recommendations for proposed
5 legislation, the reports shall be made no later than July 1, 2022.

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7 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, should the Senate Subcommittee on Graduate
8 Medical Education and the House Subcommittee on Graduate Medical Education be
9 formed, they shall be abolished on and after December 31, 2022.

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12 Respectfully submitted,

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16 Senator Missy Irvin

17 District 18

18 Prepared by: TNL/TNL

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