

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023

HR 1084

4
5 By: Representative M. Shepherd

6
7 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

8 TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
9 REGIONAL CAMPUSES OPERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF
10 ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES.

11
12
13 **Subtitle**

14 TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
15 OF THE REGIONAL CAMPUSES OPERATED BY THE
16 UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL
17 SCIENCES.

18
19 WHEREAS, Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) were first
20 conceptualized in the United States in the early 1970s after decades of
21 physician shortages in rural communities; and

22
23 WHEREAS, AHECs were developed as satellite educational programs that
24 were extensions of, but at a distance from, major academic medical center
25 campuses; and

26
27 WHEREAS, in 1972, the “Arkansas Plan for Primary Health Care” was
28 created by a select committee of legislators and leaders from the University
29 of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) appointed by then Governor Dale
30 Bumpers; and

31
32 WHEREAS, the Arkansas Plan for Primary Health Care proposed the
33 establishment of AHECs in Arkansas as a “University Medical Center without
34 walls” and Governor Bumpers viewed these rural-based AHECs as a “key step
35 towards bringing health care services, training, and providers closer to
36 Arkansans in every region of the state”; and



1
2 WHEREAS, until Arkansas AHECs were created, the only residency
3 positions open to medical graduates in the state were in Little Rock and
4 state retention rates for UAMS graduates prior to AHECs were around forty
5 percent (40%), and most who remained in-state stayed in central Arkansas; and
6

7 WHEREAS, the AHEC network was a legislative response to the nationally
8 accepted premise that health professionals usually established practices in
9 the areas where they completed postgraduate training; and
10

11 WHEREAS, in 1973, the General Assembly authorized and appropriated one
12 million dollars (\$1,000,000) to establish Arkansas AHECs that would train
13 more primary care physicians, retain more UAMS College of Medicine graduates
14 to practice in Arkansas, and improve the geographic distribution of
15 physicians within the state; and
16

17 WHEREAS, Arkansas became one of the first states in the nation to
18 develop AHECs as a state-supported approach to enhancing primary care access
19 in rural, underserved communities; and
20

21 WHEREAS, the Arkansas AHEC network was initially comprised of six (6)
22 centers distributed around the state; and
23

24 WHEREAS, each center served multiple surrounding counties such that
25 seventy-four (74) of seventy-five (75) counties were supported by an AHEC;
26 and
27

28 WHEREAS, the original AHECs were located in El Dorado, Pine Bluff, Fort
29 Smith, Fayetteville, Jonesboro, and Texarkana and subsequently, AHECs were
30 opened in Helena-West Helena, Batesville and Magnolia; and
31

32 WHEREAS, all six (6) original centers were open by 1976, with all
33 establishing family medicine residencies by AHECs 20th anniversary in 1993;
34 and
35

36 WHEREAS, as services expanded, UAMS transitioned its centers to be

1 named Regional Campuses; and

2
3 WHEREAS, in 2007, the General Assembly set aside three million one
4 hundred thousand dollars (\$3,100,000) in startup funds to establish a
5 satellite UAMS campus in Northwest Arkansas and the campus enrolled
6 approximately three hundred (300) students in the colleges of Medicine,
7 Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Professions, along with a large family medicine
8 residency program; and

9
10 WHEREAS, additional programs in physical and occupational therapy have
11 been added at the satellite UAMS campus in Northwest Arkansas over the last
12 decade and these students also help deliver care at the Arkansas State
13 Veterans Home; and

14
15 WHEREAS, in 2023, UAMS Regional Campuses provide future health care
16 professionals the opportunity to live and learn in Arkansas communities away
17 from UAMS' Little Rock campus and these students and residents are prepared
18 for practice in rural, underserved Arkansas communities through an
19 interprofessional, team-based approach to learning and patient care and a
20 more varied, hands-on experience than they would receive in a traditional
21 urban, academic environment; and

22
23 WHEREAS, each year, UAMS Regional Campuses provide state-of-the-art
24 clinical training for one hundred fifty-seven (157) family medicine residents
25 and over two hundred fifty (250) health professions students; and

26
27 WHEREAS, over the past five (5) decades, UAMS Regional Campuses have
28 trained nearly one thousand five hundred (1,500) family medicine physicians,
29 sixty-three percent (63%) of whom remained in Arkansas to practice, and
30 thirty-seven percent (37%) in rural counties; and

31
32 WHEREAS, currently, approximately seven hundred (700) UAMS Regional
33 Campuses family medicine residency graduates practice in sixty-nine (69) of
34 the state's seventy-five (75) counties; and

35
36 WHEREAS, one-half (1/2) of all family physicians practicing in rural

1 Arkansas counties completed their training at a UAMS Regional Campuses
2 program, and thousands of multidisciplinary Health Professions students and
3 tens of thousands of high school and college students have been encouraged to
4 pursue health careers through experiences at these Regional Campuses; and
5

6 WHEREAS, UAMS Regional Campuses provide comprehensive primary care
7 services to thousands of Arkansans each year in their clinics, and Regional
8 Campus faculty, trainees and staff are also active members of their
9 communities, providing leadership and significant outreach activities across
10 their regions, including health screenings, rural health research, mobile
11 outreach clinics, telehealth services, support groups, educational programs,
12 library services, and many other health-related activities; and
13

14 WHEREAS, local support, including from partnering physicians and
15 hospitals, has been invaluable in building a strong community base for UAMS
16 Regional Campuses to thrive; and
17

18 WHEREAS, Arkansas received its first federal AHEC grant from the Health
19 Resources and Services Administration in 1986 and since that time, UAMS
20 Regional Campuses faculty and staff have successfully competed for millions
21 of dollars of federal grant funds to support its primary care training
22 programs and its long-term workforce pipeline programs, such as CHAMPS and
23 M*A*S*H summer camps for middle and high school students, respectively; and
24

25 WHEREAS, working through strategic partnerships, UAMS Regional Campuses
26 will continue to identify and address healthcare workforce supply and
27 distribution needs, and to help ensure that all Arkansans have access to high
28 quality, patient-centered primary care services and well-trained providers in
29 every region of our state,
30

31 NOW THEREFORE,
32

33 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
34 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
35

36 THAT the House of Representatives celebrate the 50th anniversary of

1 UAMS Regional Campuses.

2

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the House of Representatives honor the tremendous
4 health and economic impact the UAMS Regional Campuses have had at the local,
5 regional and statewide levels, and look forward to many more years of their
6 ongoing success.

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36