HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 43

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN EXAMINATION OF THE HIGH COSTS OF PROVIDING HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO STATE AND COUNTY OFFENDERS AND CONSIDERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE PLAN FOR ALL SUCH OFFENDERS.

WHEREAS, the soaring costs of health care for offenders in the custody of the Mississippi Department of Corrections and in county jails is a problem with significant financial implications in the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, a recent example includes the shocking situation in which approximately Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000.00) was expended in caring for one (1) county prisoner at the University of Mississippi Medical Center before his death in 2002; and

WHEREAS, present practices involve the Department of Corrections entering into contracts with the University of Mississippi Medical Center and others for the provision of health care services for offenders, with little or no oversight in the execution of those contracts; and

WHEREAS, in this time of a strained state budget and slow economic growth that is requiring cut-backs of an extreme nature, a review of the funds spent in the providing of health care services for offenders is in order; and

WHEREAS, as a part of such review, a prudent course of action is to carefully examine the costs of offenders' health care and consider a comprehensive plan to provide such care throughout the state in a uniform, efficient and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the Performance, Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) Committee of the Mississippi State Legislature is equipped...
to undertake the analysis of the costs of current health care services provided to offenders and determine what the elements of an improved comprehensive health care plan should be; and

WHEREAS, in setting the guidelines for a comprehensive health care plan, the PEER Committee should include a determination of what minimum standards are necessary from a medical and constitutional standpoint, with regard to the following elements:

(a) the multitude of standard diagnostic/intake services associated with admission screening, medical history and physical examination of state and county offenders; (b) the primary care services, as well as mental health services, pharmacy services, therapeutic diets, optometry services being provided to state and county offenders; (c) the secondary and tertiary services, such as hospital care, surgical services, dental care, referral services and specialty consultations being provided to state and county offenders; and (d) the most efficient and cost-effective manner in which to obtain such care for state and county offenders:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That the Legislature requests that the PEER Committee engage in an analysis of the costs of health care services provided to state and county offenders and consider whether a comprehensive health care plan should be adopted, along with an outline of the elements of such a plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be provided to the PEER Committee, the Department of Corrections and the University of Mississippi Medical Center.