WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18B-16-2

§18B-16-2. Legislative findings and declarations.

(a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the health of the citizens of West Virginia is of paramount importance; that the education of health care professionals must be reshaped; that the delivery of health care services must be improved; that refocusing health sciences education will aid in the recruitment of health care professionals and their retention in the state; that the educational process should incorporate clinical experience in rural areas and provide improved availability of health care services throughout the state, especially in rural areas; and that the state investment in such education and services must be contained within reasonable limits.

(b) The Legislature further hereby finds and declares that the vice chancellor for health sciences shall provide an integral link among the advisory panel created in section six of this article, the health sciences programs at the state institutions of higher education, the governing boards of the state's institutions of higher education and the joint commission for vocational-technical-occupational education to assure cooperation and the coordination of efforts to effectuate the goals set forth in section four of this article.

(c) It is the further finding of the Legislature that the appropriations pursuant to section eight of this article are made with the understanding that the educational and clinical programs existing at the schools of medicine on the effective date of this section, as well as the goals of this article, will be met without requests for increases in the annual appropriations through the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 1995, with the exception of requested increases in appropriations for the purpose of meeting any increases in the salaries of personnel as may be given to other employees at state institutions of higher education under the board of trustees.

(d) The Legislature further finds that there is a serious need throughout the state for a greater number of primary care physicians and allied health care professionals and a serious need for improved accessibility to adequate health care throughout the state, especially in rural areas; that the state's medical schools are finding it difficult to satisfy the ever increasing demand for qualified persons to deliver these health care services; and that the state's institutions of higher education and rural health care facilities existing throughout the state are a major educational resource for training students in these health care services, as well as a major resource for providing health care to underserved citizens of this state.

(e) The Legislature further finds that in order to provide adequate health care in rural communities there must be a cooperative initiative among educators, physicians, mid-level providers, allied health care providers and the rural communities.

(f) The Legislature further finds that the rural health initiative and the Kellogg program have

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together implemented a nationally acclaimed, highly successful effort to enable the health professions schools to serve the rural and primary care health needs of the state and should be continued as a single program within the office of the vice chancellor for health sciences.

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