

Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly, State of North Dakota, begun in the Capitol in the City of Bismarck, on Tuesday, the fifth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4004
(Legislative Council)
(Budget Committee on Long-Term Care)**

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Council to study the possibility of creating an incentive package to assist rural communities and nursing facilities in closing or significantly reducing bed capacity and providing alternative long-term care services.

WHEREAS, North Dakota has 75.05 nursing facility beds per 1,000 elderly (age 65 and over) while the national average is fewer than 50; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota institutionalizes about 10.3 percent of its elderly population, the highest percentage in the United States; and

WHEREAS, there were 7,031 nursing facility beds available during 1996, of which 6,748 or 95.97 percent were occupied and 1,275 basic care beds available during the three-month period beginning January 1997 and ending March 1997, of which 1,061 or 83.22 percent were occupied; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid recipients occupied 56.59 percent of the nursing facility beds during 1996 and basic care assistance recipients occupied 64 percent of the basic care beds during the three-month period beginning January 1997 and ending March 1997; and

WHEREAS, the closure of a facility in a rural community can have a significant effect on the entire community similar to the loss of other local businesses, schools, hospitals, or churches; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force on Long-Term Care Planning recognizes that assistance may be needed for communities when a facility chooses to close or reduce bed capacity; and

WHEREAS, facilities in rural communities which are experiencing decreased occupancy and staffing problems usually do not have the necessary resources to develop alternatives to institutional care; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force on Long-Term Care Planning concluded that incentives and other forms of assistance should be made available to enable facilities to make the transition toward closing or to providing institutional services to fewer residents; and

WHEREAS, incentives could range from a flat payment for each bed delicensed to grants and subsidized loans for developing alternative services and involve the resources and expertise from state agencies, including the State Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Bank of North Dakota, Municipal Bond Bank, and the Department of Economic Development and Finance;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

That the Legislative Council study the possibility of creating an incentive package to assist rural communities and nursing facilities in closing or significantly reducing bed capacity and providing alternative long-term care services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislative Council report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 1999,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State