AARP Louisiana supports House Bill 951

The purpose of HB 951 is to increase consumers’ access to healthcare by removing a barrier that prevents them from accessing the services that advanced practice registered nurses are qualified to provide.

Decades of evidence demonstrate that advanced practice registered nurses have been providing high quality healthcare with positive outcomes equal to the care provided by their physician counterparts.

This bill would increase consumers’ access to primary care services by removing the mandated collaborative practice agreement between physicians and nurse practitioners who practice in medically underserved areas.

Louisiana’s current requirement for contractual collaboration with nurse practitioners can delay consumers’ access to care, especially in rural and urban underserved areas where there is a lack of available physicians with whom the nurse can collaborate.

The attached map from the Louisiana Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health of Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) demonstrates the huge need for primary care providers including nurse practitioners in our state. More than 2.6 million Louisiana citizens or 57.8% of the population reside in a primary care HPSA (Statehealthfacts.org).

This bill would immediately increase access to care for our most vulnerable citizens by increasing access to nurse practitioners who practice in medically underserved areas or care for medically underserved populations. Consumers would be able to get their necessary medications prescribed or services provided by graduate prepared, nationally certified nurse practitioners.

AARP Louisiana is deeply appreciative of the primary care and chronic care management provided by all physicians and advanced practice registered nurses. We need to be certain, however, that all health care consumers can access a primary care provider when and where they need one. HB 951 would increase access to high quality care for the most vulnerable Louisiana citizens and we urge you to support it.
Primary Care Designations

*Degree of shortage is based on the ratio of the relevant population to one (1) full time equivalency (FTE) primary care physician.

DHH/Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health, September 20, 2011

HPSA DESIGNATIONS LEGEND:
- Geographic Designation
- Population Group Designation
- Facility Designation