

1 AN ACT in relation to health.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Illinois Rural/Downstate Health Act is  
5 amended by changing Section 2 as follows:

6 (410 ILCS 65/2) (from Ch. 111 1/2, par. 8052)

7 Sec. 2. Findings; definition. The General Assembly finds  
8 that citizens in the rural, downstate and designated shortage  
9 areas of this State are increasingly faced with problems in  
10 accessing necessary health care. The closure of small rural  
11 hospitals, the inability of these areas to attract new  
12 physicians, the elimination of existing physician services  
13 because of increasing practice costs, including the cost of  
14 providing malpractice insurance, and the lack of systems of  
15 emergency medical care contribute to the access problems  
16 experienced by these residents. While Illinois is not unique  
17 in experiencing these problems, the need to maintain or  
18 enhance the economies of these areas of the State requires  
19 that new and innovative strategies be identified and  
20 implemented to respond to the health care needs of residents  
21 of these areas. It is therefore the intent of this General  
22 Assembly to create a program to respond to this problem.

23 For purposes of this Act, "designated shortage areas"  
24 means medically underserved areas or health manpower shortage  
25 area as defined by the United States Department of Health and  
26 Human Services or as otherwise designated by the Illinois  
27 Department of Public Health.

28 (Source: P.A. 91-357, eff. 7-29-99.)