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**Strengthening the Federal role in building and sustaining a well-trained work force grounded in geriatric and gerontological education**

- 1 WHEREAS appropriate care is necessary for people of all ages, particularly individuals with special needs;
- 2 WHEREAS the number of primary care physicians and other health care professionals with expertise in long-term care medicine is limited;
- 3 WHEREAS few medical and nursing schools and other health-related professional schools and programs provide education in geriatrics and gerontology;
- 4 WHEREAS there is a need to integrate geriatrics and gerontology into the curricula of these schools;
- 5 WHEREAS by 2040 there will be 83 million people over the age of 65 and 17.8 million over the age of 85;
- 6 WHEREAS projections of personnel needs in aging indicate current and future shortages of appropriately trained personnel;
- 7 WHEREAS the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) effectively trains more than 40 percent of the nation's geriatricians;
- 8 WHEREAS the number and percentage of older persons who are minorities is increasing;
- 9 WHEREAS the care of an older patient is affected by his/her culture and the provider's culture;
- 10 WHEREAS the number and percentage of geriatric health care providers and administrators who are minorities are disproportionately low; and
- 11 WHEREAS such long-term care workers as home health aides, certified nursing assistants, and other direct caregivers have the most contact with long-term care recipients, yet are paid the least and generally lack sufficient training, which leads to high turnover and diminished quality of care;

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the 1995 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:***

- 12 Increase geriatric and gerontological training in medical and nursing schools, other health professional schools and programs, continuing education, and in-service programs;

- 13 Integrate geriatrics and gerontology into the curricula of health care specialty programs;
- 14 Increase and ensure Federal, State, and regional funding for schools and programs to teach geriatrics, geriatric mental health, and gerontology; prepare primary care physicians, other health care professionals, para-professionals, and informal and formal caregivers with expertise in long-term care; and require an emphasis on health care promotion, disease prevention, and palliative care;
- 15 Strengthen and build upon the historical role of the VA, the National Institute on Aging, and graduate medical education under Medicare to educate and prepare a cadre of professionals in geriatric health care;
- 16 Promote inclusion in training about aging and developmental disabilities in geriatric and gerontology fellowship programs;
- 17 Offer scholarships and loans with forgiveness clauses and other incentives to all health professionals to study geriatrics and gerontology and/or prepare for primary care with expertise in long-term care;
- 18 Recognize that it is a Federal responsibility to train, sustain, and re-educate a health care workforce required to meet the needs of an expanding older population;
- 19 Recognize that America's educational institutions similarly have a responsibility to help shape future generations of the U.S. health care workforce to be responsive to the needs of all aging Americans, including the elimination of gender and racial bias in education and research, and promotion of cultural competence;
- 20 Improve salary and benefit packages for long-term care workers such as home health aides, Certified Nursing Assistants, personal assistants, and other direct caregivers, to reduce staff turnover and increase quality of care;
- 21 Provide sensitivity training, continuing, and in-service education for nurses, physician assistants, other professionals, para-professionals, and long-term care workers such as home health aides, certified nursing assistants, personal assistants, and other direct caregivers.