

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 4

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama faces the challenge of inadequate access to health care, with shortages of primary medical-care professionals affecting portions of 65 of Alabama's 67 counties, with the shortages extending to all areas and for all people in about two dozen counties;

WHEREAS, among the 50 states in recent years, Alabama ranked 40th in primary-care physicians and 48th in dentists, per 100,000 residents;

WHEREAS, Alabama has a significant problem with inadequate health-insurance coverage, especially among adults, with 645,000 people, 13.6 percent of its population, without health insurance and 594,000 people between the ages of 18 and 64, 20.2 percent of that population, without health insurance, according to Census Bureau estimates for 2013;

WHEREAS, ten Alabama hospitals closed between March 2011 and December 2013, and several other hospitals that provide critical health-care access are in financial jeopardy;

WHEREAS, Alabama faces major problems with chronic conditions, ranking among the top 10 states for rates of diabetes, obesity, and deaths caused by cancer and by cardiovascular diseases;

WHEREAS, Alabama continues to make real progress to improve the future of Alabama's youngest citizens, but much remains to be done, with an infant mortality rate in Alabama of 8.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, compared to a national rate of 6.0 in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the retention and recruitment of capable physicians for underserved areas is critically important, and the recent and planned openings of additional medical schools further emphasizes the state's need to retain physicians.

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon these considerations, and for other good and valid reasons related thereto, I, Robert Bentley, Governor of the State of Alabama, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Alabama, do hereby establish the Alabama Health Care Improvement Task Force ("Task Force"), to include:

1. Susan Alexander, president of the Nurse Practitioner Alliance of Alabama; clinical associate professor in nursing, University of Alabama in Huntsville.
2. Stephanie McGee Azar, acting Alabama Medicaid commissioner.
3. Billy Beasley, pharmacist; partner in Clayton Drug Co. and Clio Drug Co.; a state senator.
4. Elaine Hill Beech, pharmacist; Health Committee, Alabama House of Representatives.
5. Beverly Bell-Shambley, associate commissioner for mental health and substance abuse services, Alabama Department of Mental Health.
6. Cynthia Bisbee, executive director, The Wellness Coalition, Montgomery.
7. Jeff Brannon, chief executive officer, Monroe County Hospital.
8. Brian Buchmann, president, Alabama State Nurses Association; family practice unit director, Huntsville Hospital.
9. Jim Carnes, policy director, Alabama Arise.

10. Mitch Cohen, physician-in-chief, Children's of Alabama; chair, Department of Pediatrics, UAB School of Medicine.
11. Richard Craig, executive director, JBS Mental Health Authority.
12. Conan Davis, assistant dean for community collaborations and public health, UAB School of Dentistry.
13. Joy P. Deupree, director of professional development and assistant professor, UAB School of Nursing; a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation executive nurse fellow.
14. Gerald Dial, chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, Alabama Senate.
15. Brandon Farmer, government relations and public affairs executive with NHS Management LLC in Tuscaloosa.
16. Will Ferniany, chief executive officer, UAB Health System.
17. Ronald D. Franks, vice president of health sciences and professor of psychiatry, University of South Alabama.
18. Laura Hall, co-chair of the state Alzheimer's Disease Task Force; a state representative.
19. Sarah Harkless, director, Office of Substance Abuse Treatment and Development, Alabama Department of Mental Health.
20. Boyde J. Harrison, chairman, State Committee of Public Health.
21. Craig J. Lenz, dean, Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine.
22. Joseph Marchant, chief executive officer, Bibb County Healthcare Authority.
23. Patricia Z. Marincic, associate professor, director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, College of Human Sciences, Auburn University.
24. Stephanie McGilvray, past president, Alabama Society of Physician Assistants; assistant professor, UAB School of Health Professions.
25. Doug McIntyre, vice president, health care networks, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.
26. Max Michael, dean, UAB School of Public Health.
27. Neal Morrison, commissioner, Alabama Department of Senior Services.
28. Michael Murphree, chief executive officer, Medical AIDS Outreach of Alabama, Inc.
29. Michael J. O'Malley, executive director, Alabama Association of Health Plans.
30. Carol J. Ratcliffe, co-leader, Alabama Health Action Coalition; associate professor, Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing, Samford University.
31. Ron Sparks, director, Alabama Rural Development Office.
32. Darlene Traffanstedt, member of the State Committee of Public Health; an internal medicine physician in Hoover.
33. James A. Tucker, director, Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program, University of Alabama.
34. John B. Waits, program director, Cahaba Family Medicine Residency; chief executive officer, Cahaba Medical Care Foundation.
35. April Weaver, chair of the Health Committee, Alabama House of Representatives.
36. John R. Wheat, professor of community and rural medicine, College of Community Health Sciences, University of Alabama.
37. Charles White, chief executive officer, Franklin Primary Health Center.
38. Don Williamson, state health officer, who shall chair the Task Force.
39. Additional appointments as the Governor deems necessary.

Each member of the Task Force shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

BE IT ORDERED, that the chairman of the Task Force may create an executive committee, as well as other committees, that may bring recommendations to the full Task Force for its review.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Task Force shall adopt rules governing times and places for meetings and the manner of conducting its business. The Task Force and any committee of the task force may meet by teleconference. All Task Force members shall serve without compensation.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Task Force shall recommend to the Governor ways to improve the health of Alabamians, including ways to have more-accessible and more-affordable health care in the state. Recommendations may take the form of regulatory or statutory changes, with initial recommendations due before the 2016 regular session of the Alabama Legislature.

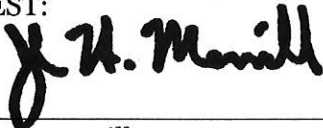
BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that this Executive Order shall become effective immediately upon signing and shall remain in force until such time it is modified or rescinded by the Governor.

DONE AND ORDERED this 6 day of April, 2015.



Robert Bentley
Governor

ATTEST:



John H. Merrill
Secretary of State