

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 34

Expressing the sense of the Congress that private health insurance companies should take a proactive role in promoting healthy lifestyles, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2003

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri (for herself, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. WAMP, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. FROST) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that private health insurance companies should take a proactive role in promoting healthy lifestyles, and for other purposes.

Whereas Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson acknowledges that \$270,000,000,000 in health costs are caused by preventable diseases, including \$183,000,000,000 for heart disease alone, and has called current policies of insurance companies “wrongheaded” for not doing more to encourage people to stay healthy to prevent expensive illnesses;

Whereas obesity increases the risk of illness from more than 30 medical conditions, including heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and diabe-

tes, which account for 2/3 of all deaths in the United States;

Whereas 61 percent of adults in the United States (120,000,000 people) are above their target weight, and 13 percent of children and adolescents in the United States are obese or overweight, a figure that has tripled since 1980;

Whereas from age 50 to 70, those who do not perform strength training lose a quarter to a third of a pound of muscle every year and gain the same amount in body fat;

Whereas weight training is proven to increase bone density and reduce osteoporosis among men and women over 50 years old;

Whereas if the more than 88,000,000 inactive adults in the United States began regular exercise, national medical costs would decrease by more than \$76,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas on June 20, 2002, President George W. Bush launched the Healthier US fitness initiative to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage people in the United States to increase their physical fitness;

Whereas the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 provides tax incentives for taxpayers who are obese, but not for those who are active and healthy; and

Whereas providing incentives for exercise and strength training would help more people become active and healthy and would decrease national medical costs: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring), That—*

1 (1) the Congress commends Secretary of Health
2 and Human Services Tommy Thompson for his ef-
3 forts to encourage private health insurance compa-
4 nies to take action to encourage people in the United
5 States to lead active lifestyles;

8 (A) do more to encourage people in the
9 United States to lead a healthier and more ac-
10 tive lifestyle to prevent expensive and painful
11 illnesses;

12 (B) provide discounted premiums to those
13 who exercise regularly; and

14 (C) encourage frequent screening for dis-
15 eases that are easily treatable in their early
16 stages; and