

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 344

To establish the Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare to make findings and issue recommendations on the future of the Medicare program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 7, 1997

Mr. STEARNS (for himself, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. WOLF) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish the Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare to make findings and issue recommendations on the future of the Medicare program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF BIPARTISAN COMMISSION**
4 **ON THE FUTURE OF MEDICARE.**

5 There is established a commission to be known as the
6 Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare (here-
7 inafter in this Act referred to as the “Commission”).

1 **SEC. 2. DUTIES.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—The Commission shall make specific
3 findings regarding each of the following:

4 (1) Patterns of spending under the medicare
5 program under title XVIII of the Social Security
6 Act.

7 (2) The long-term solvency of the Federal Hos-
8 pital Insurance Trust Fund under section 1817 of
9 the Social Security Act and the Federal Supple-
10 mentary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under sec-
11 tion 1841 of such Act.

12 (3) The feasibility and desirability of expanding
13 the choices available to medicare beneficiaries in the
14 methods through which medicare benefits are pro-
15 vided, including providing benefits through managed
16 care arrangements and through coordination with
17 employer-sponsored or other private health benefit
18 plans.

19 (4) The extent to which the solvency of the
20 trust funds described in paragraph (2) is endangered
21 by waste, fraud, and abuse under the medicare pro-
22 gram.

23 (5) The quality of services provided under the
24 medicare program.

25 (6) The effectiveness of the existing structure
26 and administration of the medicare program.

1 (b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Commission shall
2 make specific recommendations to the Congress regarding
3 its findings under subsection (a).

4 **SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.**

5 (a) APPOINTMENT.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be
7 composed of 15 members appointed as follows:

8 (A) The President shall appoint 5 mem-
9 bers, of whom not more than 3 may be of the
10 same political party and at least one shall be
11 under 35 years of age at the time of appoint-
12 ment.

13 (B) The majority leader of the Senate shall
14 appoint, after consultation with the minority
15 leader of the Senate, 5 members of the Senate,
16 of whom not more than 3 may be of the same
17 political party and at least one shall be under
18 35 years of age at the time of appointment.

19 (C) The Speaker of the House of Rep-
20 resentatives shall appoint, after consultation
21 with the minority leader of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives, 5 members of the House, of whom
23 not more than 3 may be of the same political
24 party and at least one shall be under 35 years
25 of age at the time of appointment.

1 (2) DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.—The mem-
2 bers of the Commission shall be appointed not later
3 than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this
4 Act.

5 (b) CHAIRMAN.—As the first item of business at the
6 first meeting of the Commission, the members of the Com-
7 mission shall elect a chairman of the Commission from
8 among its members.

9 (c) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the membership of
10 the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the
11 original appointment was made and shall not affect the
12 power of the remaining members to execute the duties of
13 the Commission.

14 (d) QUORUM.—A quorum shall consist of 8 members
15 of the Commission, except that 4 members may conduct
16 a hearing under section 5(a).

17 (e) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the
18 call of its chairman or a majority of its members.

19 (f) COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EX-
20 PENSES.—Members of the Commission are not entitled to
21 receive compensation for service on the Commission. Mem-
22 bers may be reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and other
23 necessary expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of
24 the Commission.

1 **SEC. 4. STAFF AND CONSULTANTS.**

2 (a) STAFF.—The Commission may appoint and de-
3 termine the compensation of such staff as may be nec-
4 essary to carry out the duties of the Commission. Such
5 appointments and compensation may be made without re-
6 gard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, that
7 govern appointments in the competitive services, and the
8 provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53
9 of such title that relate to classifications and the General
10 Schedule pay rates.

11 (b) CONSULTANTS.—The Commission may procure
12 such temporary and intermittent services of consultants
13 under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, as
14 the Commission determines to be necessary to carry out
15 the duties of the Commission.

16 **SEC. 5. POWERS.**

17 (a) HEARINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.—For the
18 purpose of carrying out its duties, the Commission may
19 hold such hearings and undertake such other activities as
20 the Commission determines to be necessary to carry out
21 its duties.

22 (b) STUDIES BY GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE.—
23 Upon the request of the Commission, the Comptroller
24 General shall conduct such studies or investigations as the
25 Commission determines to be necessary to carry out its
26 duties.

1 (c) COST ESTIMATES BY CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET
2 OFFICE.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of the
4 Commission, the Director of the Congressional
5 Budget Office shall provide to the Commission such
6 cost estimates as the Commission determines to be
7 necessary to carry out its duties.

8 (2) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Commission shall
9 reimburse the Director of the Congressional Budget
10 Office for expenses relating to the employment in
11 the office of the Director of such additional staff as
12 may be necessary for the Director to comply with re-
13 quests by the Commission under paragraph (1).

14 (d) DETAIL OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—Upon the
15 request of the Commission, the head of any Federal agen-
16 cy is authorized to detail, without reimbursement, any of
17 the personnel of such agency to the Commission to assist
18 the Commission in carrying out its duties. Any such detail
19 shall not interrupt or otherwise affect the civil service sta-
20 tus or privileges of the Federal employee.

21 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon the request of
22 the Commission, the head of a Federal agency shall pro-
23 vide such technical assistance to the Commission as the
24 Commission determines to be necessary to carry out its
25 duties.

1 (f) USE OF MAILS.—The Commission may use the
2 United States mails in the same manner and under the
3 same conditions as Federal agencies, and shall, for pur-
4 poses of the frank, be considered a commission of Con-
5 gress as described in section 3215 of title 39, United
6 States Code.

7 (g) OBTAINING INFORMATION.—The Commission
8 may secure directly from any Federal agency information
9 necessary to enable it to carry out its duties, if the infor-
10 mation may be disclosed under section 552 of title 5,
11 United States Code. Upon request of the Chairman of the
12 Commission, the head of such agency shall furnish such
13 information to the Commission.

14 (h) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon
15 the request of the Commission, the Administrator of Gen-
16 eral Services shall provide to the Commission on a reim-
17 bursable basis such administrative support services as the
18 Commission may request.

19 (i) ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS.—The Commission
20 may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of serv-
21 ices or property.

22 (j) PRINTING.—For purposes of costs relating to
23 printing and binding, including the costs of personnel de-
24 tailed from the Government Printing Office, the Commis-
25 sion shall be deemed to be a committee of the Congress.

1 **SEC. 6. REPORT.**

2 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
3 of this Act, the Commission shall submit to Congress a
4 report containing its findings and recommendations under
5 section 2, and shall include in the report recommendations
6 for appropriate legislative initiatives to carry out its rec-
7 ommendations.

8 **SEC. 7. TERMINATION.**

9 The Commission shall terminate 30 days after the
10 date of submission of the report required in section 6.

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