

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 152

Expressing the sense of Congress that urgent action is needed to limit the hardship endured by senior citizens when meeting their prescription drug needs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 1999

Mr. MASCARA (for himself, Mr. WAMP, and Mr. ACKERMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that urgent action is needed to limit the hardship endured by senior citizens when meeting their prescription drug needs.

Whereas there are 39,000,000 medicare beneficiaries in the United States, an estimated 35 percent of whom do not have prescription drug insurance coverage;

Whereas senior citizens make up 12 percent of the population in America but consume 33 percent of the prescription drugs;

Whereas senior citizens must fill an average of 18.5 prescriptions annually;

Whereas senior citizens spend 3 times as much of their income on health care as do those under the age of 65;

Whereas prescription drug prices have risen at 3 times the rate of inflation in recent years;

Whereas many senior citizens live on fixed incomes and are unable to afford costly and unforeseen prescription drug costs;

Whereas prescription drug costs in the United States are between 30 and 50 percent higher than in Europe;

Whereas the cost of private health plans with prescription drug benefits are usually prohibitively expensive and inadequate for those on fixed incomes without insurance;

Whereas senior citizens without a prescription drug benefit must fill their prescriptions at a cost at least twice as high as those with insurance; and

Whereas current drug manufacturing industry pricing practices favor customers who buy larger quantities than smaller retail businesses: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) prescription drug accessibility is crucial to
4 the well-being of our country's senior citizens;

5 (2) prescription drug costs should not prohibit
6 our Nation's seniors from taking the vital steps necessary to maintain their health;

7 (3) extending prescription drug benefits to seniors
8 should not require the creation of extensive new
9 bureaucracies, regulations, or price controls; and
10

- 1 (4) Congress should pursue legislative measures
- 2 to address this matter as soon as possible.

