

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4134

To provide for an increase in the availability of language-assistance services for patients of health centers under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, including community health centers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 10, 2002

Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. OWENS, Ms. WATSON of California, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. McGOVERN, Mr. FROST, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To provide for an increase in the availability of language-assistance services for patients of health centers under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, including community health centers.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds as follows:

5 (1) The uninsured population in the United
6 States continues to grow at over 100,000 individuals

1 per month, and is estimated to reach over
2 53,000,000 people by 2007.

3 (2) A substantial subset of the uninsured popu-
4 lation in the United States are individuals for whom
5 English is not their first language and who have lim-
6 ited English-speaking ability.

7 (3) The problem of health care access for unin-
8 sured populations with limited English-speaking
9 ability is compounded in many urban and rural com-
10 munities by a lack of translation and interpretative
11 services that better enable individuals to commu-
12 nicate with providers in order to fully access health
13 care services in a culturally competent manner.

14 (4) Community, migrant, homeless, and public
15 housing health centers under section 330 of the
16 Public Health Service Act have proven uniquely
17 qualified to address the lack of adequate health care
18 services for uninsured populations, serving over
19 4,500,000 uninsured patients in 1999, including
20 over 1,000,000 new uninsured patients who have
21 sought care from such centers in the last three
22 years.

23 (5) The provision of enabling services to health
24 center patients, including translation and interpreta-
25 tion services, are an integral element of the program

1 for health centers under section 330 of the Public
2 Health Service Act.

3 (6) 80 percent of health centers provided trans-
4 lation and interpretation services on-site to their pa-
5 tients in the year 2000.

6 (7) 2,600,000 health center patients received
7 translation services in 2000, which accounted for ap-
8 proximately 10,500,000 health center visits in that
9 year.

10 (8) Access to health care for individuals with
11 limited English-speaking ability has been greatly im-
12 proved when translation and interpretation services
13 are provided to health center patients and providers
14 and when patient information (enrollment forms,
15 educational materials) are available in the languages
16 spoken by the patient population.

17 **SEC. 2. INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF LANGUAGE-ASSIST-
18 ANCE SERVICES FOR PATIENTS OF HEALTH
19 CENTERS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
20 ACT.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program for
22 health centers under section 330 of the Public Health
23 Service Act, including community health centers, the Sec-
24 retary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that
25 amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of this section

1 are expended to provide translation and interpretation
2 services for patients of the health center who have limited
3 English-speaking ability, including hiring professional
4 translation and interpretation services and compensating
5 staff of the health centers who provide language-assistance
6 services for such patients. The Secretary shall ensure that
7 such amounts are expended to increase and not supplant
8 amounts expended by the health centers pursuant to sec-
9 tion 330(j)(3)(K) of such Act (relating to patients of lim-
10 ited English-speaking ability).

11 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
12 purpose of carrying out subsection (a), there are author-
13 ized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2003,
14 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal
15 years 2004 through 2007. Such authorization is in addi-
16 tion to other authorizations of appropriations that are
17 available for such purpose.

