

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2186

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a minimum Medicare payment rate for primary care services furnished by primary care physicians.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 31, 2014

Mr. BEGICH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a minimum Medicare payment rate for primary care services furnished by primary care physicians.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Medicare Access Im-
5 provement Act of 2014”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that the 2010 Report to Congress of
8 the Interagency Access to Health Care In Alaska Task
9 Force found that—

1 (1) there is a shortage of primary care Medi-
 2 care providers in Alaska, a problem most severe in
 3 Anchorage but evident in Fairbanks as well as in
 4 rural Alaska;

5 (2) the main reason physicians give for not
 6 wanting to add new Medicare patients is their per-
 7 ception of Medicare’s inadequate reimbursement;

8 (3) the Medicare program has the lowest reim-
 9 bursement level of the six primary payers of health
 10 care in Alaska;

11 (4) the typical physician can have a viable prac-
 12 tice in Alaska without servicing any Medicare pa-
 13 tients; and

14 (5) many in the provider community believe
 15 that a fair, adequate, and uniform Federal rate
 16 would alleviate existing provider shortages in Alaska.

17 **SEC. 3. MINIMUM MEDICARE PAYMENT RATE FOR PRIMARY**
 18 **CARE SERVICES FURNISHED BY PRIMARY**
 19 **CARE PHYSICIANS.**

20 Section 1848(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
 21 1395w-4(b)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 22 lowing new paragraph:

23 “(8) MINIMUM PAYMENT RATE FOR PRIMARY
 24 CARE SERVICES FURNISHED BY PRIMARY CARE PHY-
 25 SICIANS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, subject to paragraphs (3), (7), and (8) of subsection (a) and subsection (p), the payment rate under the fee schedule under this section for primary care services (as defined in subparagraph (B)) furnished in 2015 and 2016 by a physician with a primary specialty designation of family medicine, general internal medicine, or geriatric medicine may not be less than 100 percent of the payment rate that applied in 2013 to such services and such a physician under the Medicaid plan under title XIX for the State in which the service is furnished.

“(B) PRIMARY CARE SERVICES DEFINED.—In subparagraph (A), the term ‘primary care services’ means evaluation and management services that are procedure codes for services in the category designated Evaluation and Management in the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (established by the Secretary under subsection (c)(5) as of December 31, 2014, and as subsequently modified).”.

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