

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 25

Commemorating 50 years since the creation of the Medicare and Medicaid Programs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 8, 2015

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance

RESOLUTION

Commemorating 50 years since the creation of the Medicare and Medicaid Programs.

Whereas, on January 7, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson called on Congress to provide health insurance for the elderly and most vulnerable;

Whereas over the past 50 years, Congress has strengthened Medicare and Medicaid with improvements to, and expansion of, health care benefits;

Whereas today, as a result of President Johnson's call to action and Congress' bipartisan initiative that created the Medicare program, 54,000,000 seniors and people with disabilities have access to guaranteed health care benefits;

Whereas today, 68,000,000 Americans, including children, pregnant women, individuals with disabilities, elderly who are poor and frail, and low income adults and parents have access to health care through Medicaid;

Whereas Medicare and Medicaid have been leaders in improving the quality of care delivered to the Nation, resulting in 1,300,000 fewer infections, accidents or other adverse events and avoiding 150,000 unnecessary hospital readmissions;

Whereas Medicare has been an innovator in developing alternative ways to pay for health care that emphasize care coordination across all health care providers and settings;

Whereas Medicare provides access to needed care, including primary and specialty care, free preventative services, and prescription drugs;

Whereas the creation of a prescription drug benefit in 2003 has ensured that nearly 90 percent of Medicare beneficiaries have prescription drug coverage, and since 2010, over 8,200,000 seniors have saved more than \$11,500,000,000 on their prescription drugs as a result of closing the Medicare Part D coverage gap;

Whereas in 2013, an estimated 37,200,000 people with Medicare took advantage of at least one preventative service with no cost sharing;

Whereas Medicaid is a critical source of comprehensive, affordable health coverage for millions of otherwise unin-

sured low-income adults and parents, including millions of nonelderly low income adults in states that expanded their Medicaid programs as part of health reform;

Whereas Medicaid ensures access to long-term services and supports for vulnerable low income seniors and persons with disabilities by covering 60 percent of nursing home residents, picking up 40 percent of the Nation's long-term care costs, and allowing loved ones to live with health and dignity in their own homes and communities;

Whereas Medicaid provides early comprehensive childhood screening, diagnosis, and treatment for 32,000,000 of the Nation's children, including half of all low-income children; and

Whereas Medicaid provides crucial services for pregnant women and babies in that Medicaid covers 45 percent of births nationwide, 53 percent of hospital stays for infants born prematurely or with a low birth weight, and 45 percent of hospital stays for infants with birth defects: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (1) all efforts to improve Medicare and Med-
3 icaid must support and build upon President John-
4 son's vision "to assure the availability of and acces-
5 sibility to the best healthcare to all Americans, re-
6 gardless of age or geography or economic status";

7 (2) Medicare's guaranteed benefit is a lifeline to
8 millions of Americans and must remain intact for
9 this and future generations;

1 (3) Medicare should not be transformed into a
2 voucher program, leaving seniors and people with
3 disabilities vulnerable to higher out-of-pocket costs;

4 (4) with the strong support of the Federal Gov-
5 ernment, Medicaid continues to serve as a safety net
6 for vulnerable children, pregnant women, persons
7 with disabilities, elderly who are poor and frail, and
8 other low income adults; and

9 (5) Medicaid should not be dismantled through
10 block grants, per-capita caps, or by other policies
11 that slash funding, shift cost to states, reduce bene-
12 fits, and erode the safety net relied on by over
13 68,000,000 Americans.

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