

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, I had the opportunity to celebrate the cold winter in Minnesota by getting together with hundreds of others and jumping through a hole in the ice and into a freezing lake.

Now, while some may think that many Minnesotans consider this normal recreational activity in the winter, it actually was to raise money for a very worthwhile cause.

The Polar Plunge, which takes place throughout Minnesota and other areas of the country all winter long, raises millions of dollars for the Special Olympics programs. This important funding allows more than 7,200 Special Olympics athletes in Minnesota to grow and thrive through a variety of competitions.

I want to thank our State's law enforcement for organizing the plunges, Channel 9's Ian Leonard for giving his selfless time and energy to support this cause and events, to all those who pledged their support for the participants, and of course, those who are crazy enough to jump in the middle of the winter through a hole in the ice.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer and congratulate the support for the Special Olympics, an organization that is truly life-changing for its participants and their families.

GIRL SCOUTS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the service of our Nation's Girl Scouts.

On this week, more than 100 years ago, Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low officially registered the Girl Scouts' first 18 members. Since that time, the Girl Scouts experience has enriched the lives of millions of girls, their families, and our communities.

I am especially proud to highlight the hard work of Felicia Dodge, a Girl Scout from Glenville, New York. Felicia is currently working on her Gold Award project to help create a sustainable sewing program at a local school in Haiti.

Felicia's project empowers the community to clothe themselves and hone the skills to run a sustainable business. Her hard work and certainly her involvement will send over 600 pounds of materials and supplies to the school. I applaud Felicia for her thoughtful and certainly inspiring endeavor.

On behalf of the citizens of the 20th Congressional District of New York, I thank the Girl Scouts of northeastern New York for their commitment and for their service to our communities.

EDUCATION IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT

(Mr. FLEISCHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor America's teachers. I do that because I spoke with my 17-year-old son, who is a junior at Silverdale Baptist Academy, and he was asking me about teachers.

Now, most of you all know I had two elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools in my own career. I told my son how important teaching is. Just think about it: all across America today and in all of our 50 States, teachers are teaching and inspiring our children.

Education is critically important, whether it is in the private sector or in the public sector. It is so critically important that we get it right, and teaching is such a noble profession.

I wanted to rise today, Mr. Speaker, and just say thank you to our Nation's teachers. Keep up the great work. Keep inspiring our young minds, so that we can continue to move ahead as a great Nation.

THOMSON PRISON

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Thomson Correctional Center, a facility that has sat vacant in the town of Thomson, a small village in northern Illinois, since it was built by the State of Illinois in 2001.

For more than a decade, the people of my region have been thirsting for the jobs and the economic opportunity that the opening of this facility would bring.

Yesterday, we received the very good news that we had been waiting for, for a long time. This was delivered to us from the Bureau of Prisons, which announced that they will designate the funding to activate the Thomson Correctional Center.

This investment means construction can soon begin. It means that workers can soon begin competing for good-paying jobs, and it means that northern Illinois will no longer be home to an empty prison.

When fully open, the Thomson Correctional Center will add 1,100 jobs to our region and will add \$200 million in annual economic impact. The prison's activation will not only be good for our economy, but it will also generate a sense of pride among the people I serve in the surrounding communities. We finally will see the dormant facility put to good use.

REINING IN EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(Mr. SMITH of Missouri asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, President Obama and the administration have taken the uber-Presidency to a whole new level.

Time and time again, we have seen President Obama stretch the constitutional limits of the office. When President Obama simply disagrees with a law, he just ignores it. Mr. Speaker, no person is above the law.

The House of Representatives is committed to living by the Constitution and holding the administration accountable. The ENFORCE Act will give Congress the ability to bring a lawsuit against the President for failing to execute our laws.

The Faithful Execution of the Law Act will require any Federal official who is not enforcing a Federal law to report to Congress on the reason for nonenforcement. Mr. Speaker, the ENFORCE Act and the Faithful Execution of the Law Act uphold the Constitution.

These bills send a clear message that no one is above the law, and we will not have the Constitution be disregarded.

TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS COMPLEX

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the important research being done at the Department of Defense into treating tuberous sclerosis complex or TSC.

Individuals with TSC experience tumors in the brain and other vital organs, which can result in seizures, kidney failure, and other serious health problems. I have had the opportunity to meet with people affected by this illness and understand how critical it is to continue medical research into treatments while scientists develop a cure for TSC.

Funding the DOD TSC research program is essential in developing new clinical treatments and medical breakthroughs for the disorder. In addition, this research has applications for other medical conditions, such as traumatic brain injuries, which are common in combat and sports injuries. TSC research breakthroughs will likely also have applications to some specific cancers.

By committing support and funding for this important research, we give hope to those living with TSC and other chronic illnesses to help them live long and healthy lives.

SITES RESERVOIR

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, California is suffering from its worst drought in at least 35 years, maybe as much as 400 years; though lately, the Good Lord has sought to bless us with about 5 inches of rain on my farm and my neighborhood, we can't let that be a cause for inaction. Indeed, the Good Lord helps those who help themselves.

It is time to build. It has been time to build, for a long time, the type of

water storage that moves California ahead and supplies farms, cities, and environmental needs.

We have this opportunity in a project that has long awaited our authorization, the Sites Reservoir in the western part of Colusa and Glenn Counties, a district that I used to represent in the State legislature and which my colleague, JOHN GARAMENDI, now represents in Congress.

We will soon be introducing a piece of legislation to move forward on the Sites Reservoir with an authorization for the funds needed to complete the studies and get started.

Some may say: Well, it will take 7 or 10 years to get this done.

Had we started 7 or 10 years ago, we would be right near completion; so we need to start today, and the people will thank us 7 or 10 years from now when we get this done. This will be introduced, hopefully, soon.

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MILITARY TRANSITION SUPPORT PROJECT

(Mr. PETERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the Military Transition Support Project, an innovative program to ease the transition for recently discharged veterans as they return to civilian life, which I helped launch last month.

Each year, over 15,000 servicemembers are discharged in San Diego, and around half will choose to stay there. Over the past year, we have worked with our local veteran leadership, our Navy and Marine commanders, and the San Diego philanthropic community to create a central system to help servicemembers navigate through their transition process.

This unique effort will improve the quality of life for servicemembers across San Diego. The program will begin in the last year of service and will give these dedicated men and women access to resources and continuous support throughout the transition process, beginning while they are still in uniform, by providing a central portal for benefits, employment, and housing.

This program has the potential to serve as a model for military communities around the country. It represents a groundbreaking, collaborative effort where the military, nonprofits, and private sector stakeholders can come together in the cooperative spirit that is a hallmark of San Diego to get our veterans to work.

SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 515, I call up the bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title XVIII of the

Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the amendment printed in part B of House Report 113-379 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4015

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Repealing the sustainable growth rate (SGR) and improving Medicare payment for physicians’ services.

Sec. 3. Priorities and funding for measure development.

Sec. 4. Encouraging care management for individuals with chronic care needs.

Sec. 5. Ensuring accurate valuation of services under the physician fee schedule.

Sec. 6. Promoting evidence-based care.

Sec. 7. Empowering beneficiary choices through access to information on physicians’ services.

Sec. 8. Expanding availability of Medicare data.

Sec. 9. Reducing administrative burden and other provisions.

SEC. 2. REPEALING THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) AND IMPROVING MEDICARE PAYMENT FOR PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES.

(a) STABILIZING FEE UPDATES.—

(1) REPEAL OF SGR PAYMENT METHODOLOGY.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “or a subsequent paragraph” after “paragraph (4)”; and

(ii) in paragraph (4)—

(I) in the heading, by inserting “AND ENDING WITH 2013” after “YEARS BEGINNING WITH 2001”; and

(II) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and ending with 2013” after “a year beginning with 2001”; and

(B) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “through 2013” after “of each succeeding year”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and ending with 2013” after “beginning with 2000”.

(2) UPDATE OF RATES FOR APRIL THROUGH DECEMBER OF 2014, 2015, AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Subsection (d) of section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended by striking paragraph (15) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(15) UPDATE FOR 2014 THROUGH 2018.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2014 and each subsequent year through 2018 shall be 0.5 percent.

“(16) UPDATE FOR 2019 THROUGH 2023.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2019 and each subsequent year through 2023 shall be zero percent.

“(17) UPDATE FOR 2024 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2024 and each subsequent year shall be—

“(A) for items and services furnished by a qualifying APM participant (as defined in section 1833(z)(2)) for such year, 1.0 percent; and

“(B) for other items and services, 0.5 percent.”.

(3) MEDPAC REPORTS.—

(A) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2016, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on the relationship between—

(i) physician and other health professional utilization and expenditures (and the rate of increase of such utilization and expenditures) of items and services for which payment is made under section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4); and

(ii) total utilization and expenditures (and the rate of increase of such utilization and expenditures) under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII of such Act.

Such report shall include a methodology to describe such relationship and the impact of changes in such physician and other health professional practice and service ordering patterns on total utilization and expenditures under parts A, B, and D of such title.

(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2020, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on the relationship described in subparagraph (A), including the results determined from applying the methodology included in the report submitted under such subparagraph.

(C) REPORT ON UPDATE TO PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE.—Not later than July 1, 2018, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on—

(i) the payment update for professional services applied under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act for the period of years 2014 through 2018;

(ii) the effect of such update on the efficiency, economy, and quality of care provided under such program;

(iii) the effect of such update on ensuring a sufficient number of providers to maintain access to care by Medicare beneficiaries; and

(iv) recommendations for any future payment updates for professional services under such program to ensure adequate access to care is maintained for Medicare beneficiaries.

(b) CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN CURRENT LAW PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS WITH NEW MERIT-BASED INCENTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM.—

(1) EHR MEANINGFUL USE INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—

(A) SUNSETTING SEPARATE MEANINGFUL USE PAYMENT ADJUSTMENTS.—Section 1848(a)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(7)(A)) is amended—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “or any subsequent payment year” and inserting “or 2017”; and

(ii) in clause (ii)—

(I) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking “Subject to clause (iii), for” and inserting “For”; and

(II) in subclause (I), by adding at the end “and”;

(III) in subclause (II), by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(IV) by striking subclause (III); and

(iii) by striking clause (iii).

(B) CONTINUATION OF MEANINGFUL USE DETERMINATIONS FOR MIPS.—Section 1848(o)(2) of