

S.J. RES. 104

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGRO), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 104, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

S. RES. 236

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 236, a resolution calling for the return of abducted Ukrainian children before finalizing any peace agreement to end the war against Ukraine.

S. RES. 606

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 606, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran for its suppression of the right of Iranians to peacefully assemble.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3934. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the availability of medical nutrition therapy services under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2026, along with my colleague from Michigan Senator PETERS. Our bill will expand Medicare beneficiaries' access to medical nutrition therapy, or MNT, which is a cost-effective component of treatment for obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and other chronic conditions. Increasing access to MNT should be part of the strategy to improve disease management and prevention for America's seniors. The Medical Nutrition Therapy Act would make two important changes to support patients, improve health outcomes, and reduce unnecessary healthcare costs.

First, the bill would expand Medicare Part B coverage of outpatient medical nutrition therapy services to several currently uncovered diseases or conditions, including prediabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, malnutrition, eating disorders, cancer, HIV/AIDS, gastrointestinal diseases including celiac disease, and cardiovascular disease. Currently, Medicare Part B only covers outpatient MNT for diabetes, renal disease, and post-kidney transplant.

Second, the bill would allow more types of providers—including nurse practitioners, physician assistants,

clinical nurse specialists, and psychologists—to refer patients to MNT. Right now, only physicians may refer patients to dietitians for medical nutrition therapy. Expanding the types of providers who make these referrals would be especially significant for patients in a rural State like Maine where an NP or PA may be one's trusted primary care provider.

MNT counseling is provided by registered dietitian nutritionists, RDNs, as part of a collaborative healthcare team. It is evidence-based and has been proven to positively affect weight, blood pressure, blood lipids, and blood sugar control. Nutritional counseling by RDNs is recommended by the National Lipid Association to promote long-term adherence to an individualized, heart-healthy diet. Through MST, individuals benefit from in-depth, individualized nutrition assessments. Followup visits help reinforce important behavior and lifestyle changes and increase compliance.

Seniors deserve improved access to this cost-effective medical treatment, but many older adults are missing out under the current Medicare policy. I heard from a dietitian in rural Washington County, ME, who is the only part-time dietitian in the county and works at a federally qualified health center, FQHC. One of her patients is an elderly man with severe tooth decay requiring a modified personalized meal plan. He lost 40 pounds in 1 year despite being cleared for any gastrointestinal or other underlying medical condition that could have caused this extreme weight loss. He became clinically malnourished. Finally, his primary care provider referred him to the dietitian at the FQHC for medical nutrition therapy with a diagnosis of failure to thrive.

Because this patient, however, did not have a diagnosis of diabetes or renal disease, the FQHC at which he received treatment will not receive Medicare reimbursement for the three 60-minute medical nutrition therapy sessions that the dietitian provided. At his third and final session, the patient shared that this dietitian was the most helpful provider with whom he had ever met. He is no longer afraid of eating and has more good days enjoying meals with family and friends.

Another patient from Maine, who is a Medicare beneficiary, was treated for severe obesity with gastric bypass surgery. This patient was unable to afford out of pocket costs to receive post-operative medical nutrition therapy. He struggled with post-operative diet advancement, which led to hospitalization for severe dehydration and failure to thrive within the first 3 months after surgery. One year after surgery, this patient had severe nutritional anemia requiring iron infusion and monthly vitamin B-12 injections. This tragic situation could have been prevented if the MNT he needed had been covered by Medicare. Early treatment with MNT can prevent serious health com-

plications and chronic conditions, particularly in older adults.

In addition to the human cost, there is a financial one: the impact on the Medicare Program. This should not come as a surprise since the health and economic effects of chronic diseases are staggering. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 90 percent of the \$4.9 trillion that the United States spends annually on healthcare goes to the treatment of people with chronic diseases and mental health conditions. Preventing chronic diseases, or managing symptoms when prevention is not possible is an effective way to reduce these costs. This is particularly important for the Medicare Program as more than two-thirds of seniors on Medicare live with multiple chronic conditions. As one registered dietitian nutritionist in Maine told me, "We all know a dollar spent on prevention saves many health care dollars in the long run and is the right thing to do for our seniors at a time when they have limited budgets."

The Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2025 is supported by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the American Diabetes Association, the Endocrine Society, and UsAgainstAlzheimer's. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation to improve access to cost-effective medical treatment for Medicare patients with chronic diseases.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 616—REQUESTING INFORMATION ON HONDURAS'S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES PURSUANT TO SECTION 502B(C) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 616

Resolved,

SECTION 1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON HONDURAS'S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.

(a) STATEMENT REQUESTED.—The Senate requests that the Secretary of State, not later than 30 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution, submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(c)), a statement regarding Honduras's human rights practices that has been prepared in collaboration with the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and the Office of the Legal Adviser at the Department of State.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The statement submitted pursuant to subsection (a) shall include—

(1) all available credible information concerning alleged violations of internationally recognized human rights by the Government of the Republic of Honduras under former President Juan Orlando Hernández, including—

(A) connections between high-level government officials and drug trafficking organizations, including the Sinaloa Cartel;

(B) corruption of government officials related to drug trafficking, including money laundering and bribery;

(C) torture, rape, illegal detention, witness tampering, and murder in connection with drug cartels and drug trafficking; and

(D) efforts to undermine police reforms and drug crime investigations;

(2) a description of the steps the United States Government has taken—

(A) to promote respect for and observance of human rights as part of the Government of Honduras's activities;

(B) to bring Honduran government officials to justice for their involvement in drug trafficking and related crimes;

(C) to discourage any practices that are inimical to internationally recognized human rights; and

(D) to publicly or privately call attention to, and disassociate the United States and any security assistance provided for the Republic of Honduras from, any practices described in subparagraphs (B) and (C); and

(3) other information, including—

(A) an assessment from the Secretary of State of the likelihood that United States security assistance (as defined in section 502B(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(d))) provided to the Republic of Honduras has been used in support of activities related to facilitating drug trafficking and its attendant crimes;

(B) an assessment from the Secretary of State of former President Juan Orlando Hernández's status post-conviction and any ongoing ties he maintains to drug cartels; and

(C) a description of any actions that the United States Government is taking to ensure that the Government of the Republic of Honduras addresses corruption and human rights violations tied to drug trafficking.

SENATE RESOLUTION 617—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF “CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH”

Mr. KAINÉ (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BRITT, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. JUSTICE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. PETERS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 617

Whereas American competitiveness within the global economy requires workers who are prepared with the requisite academic knowledge as well as technical and employability skills needed for career success;

Whereas advancements in technology have fundamentally changed critical economic sectors of the United States and the global economy, creating significant, new demand for high-wage, high-quality, and efficient education and training opportunities;

Whereas career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as “CTE”) ensures that a competitive and skilled workforce is ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields;

Whereas CTE helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student academic achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas, in the United States, it is forecast that by 2031 nearly ½ of all jobs will require some level of postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree;

Whereas approximately 12,000,000 students are enrolled in CTE programs across the United States at the secondary and postsecondary levels, with CTE programs in thousands of comprehensive high schools, technical high schools, area technical centers, career academies, and over 1,000 2-year colleges;

Whereas CTE aligns with labor market demand and provides employability skills and relevant academic and technical coursework leading to credentials of value for secondary and postsecondary education students and adult learners;

Whereas CTE affords students the opportunity to cultivate the knowledge and skills to earn the credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas secondary CTE has statistically significant positive impacts on the academic achievement, high school completion, employability skills, and college readiness of students;

Whereas, according to a recent national survey conducted by the Hunt Institute and Lake Research Partners, 91 percent of voters favor increased opportunities for students to access workforce training and related opportunities to cultivate skills needed for a career;

Whereas 83 percent of employers in the United States recruiting from CTE programs find those programs beneficial to their bottom line;

Whereas, in 2018, Congress affirmed on a wide bipartisan basis the importance of CTE by passing the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Public Law 115-224; 132 Stat. 1563), which supports investment and improvement in secondary and postsecondary CTE programs in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and outlying areas; and

Whereas February 23, 2026, marks the 109th anniversary of the signing of the Act of February 23, 1917 (39 Stat. 929, chapter 114, commonly known as the “Smith-Hughes Vocational Education Act of 1917”), which was the first major Federal investment in secondary CTE and laid the foundation for the bipartisan, bicameral support for CTE that continues as of February 2026: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of February 2026 as “Career and Technical Education Month” to celebrate career and technical education across the United States;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month;

(3) recognizes the importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(4) encourages educators, school counselors, guidance and career development professionals, administrators, and parents to promote career and technical education as a respected educational pathway for students.

SENATE RESOLUTION 618—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (“CTE”) EDUCATORS AND WORK-BASED LEARNING COORDINATORS IN DELIVERING HIGH-QUALITY CTE, PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE, THE CLASSROOM, AND IN LIFE, AND SUPPORTING DYNAMIC WORKFORCE PIPELINES THAT ENABLE THE UNITED STATES TO GROW AND LEAD IN CRITICAL ECONOMIC SECTORS

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. KAINÉ, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. JUSTICE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 618

Whereas students in classrooms across the United States today are the future leaders, innovators, and workers of tomorrow, and the future of American competitiveness and economic stability is predicated on a robust workforce prepared to meet the needs of critical sectors;

Whereas career and technical education (“CTE”) educators work with secondary and post-secondary students—

(1) to explore career pathways;

(2) to teach academic, technical, and practical, sector-specific, hands-on skills across a wide-range of in-demand industries and occupations; and

(3) to develop skills necessary for rewarding employment and success in life;

Whereas work-based learning coordinators help build a bridge for students between the classroom and real workplace experience by collaborating with education systems, CTE programs, and industry partners to facilitate meaningful, age-appropriate work-based learning experiences for students that include internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing;

Whereas there are CTE programs in every State and territory, and there are approximately 12,000,000 students enrolled in CTE programs across the United States;

Whereas the high school graduation rate for CTE concentrators is 97 percent, which is above the national average, and these students are more likely than others to be employed full time and have higher median annual earnings 8 years after graduation;

Whereas without CTE educators providing support, instruction, and industry knowledge, and without the support of work-based learning coordinators, students would not be able to participate in and enjoy the benefits of CTE programs;

Whereas student participation and interest in CTE programs remains consistent, yet there are persistent shortages of CTE educators, with school administrators reporting difficulty filling positions in CTE subjects 57 percent of the time, and retaining CTE educators in high-growth fields is challenging;

Whereas, in the 2025–2026 academic year, 25 States, the District of Columbia, and American Samoa reported CTE educator shortages;

Whereas 79 percent of high school students expressed an interest in work-based learning experiences, yet only 34 percent of high school students reported being aware of opportunities within their age group;