

By: Capelo

H.C.R. No. 101

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, Advances in the effectiveness of prescriptive  
2 medication have substantially improved the quality of health care  
3 in the United States; a key component of preventive health care,  
4 prescription drugs help patients live healthier, longer, and more  
5 productive lives without the need for costly long-term acute care;  
6 and

7           WHEREAS, Since the passage of the Social Security Act of  
8 1965, which originally authorized Medicare, the increased use of  
9 new and improved prescription drugs has changed the delivery of  
10 health care in the United States; nonetheless, of the more than 40  
11 million people enrolled in Medicare, one-third have no prescription  
12 drug coverage, and the limited coverage available to the remaining  
13 two-thirds of Medicare beneficiaries is often inadequate to meet  
14 their needs; and

15           WHEREAS, Comprehensive reform of the Medicare program is  
16 necessary to provide affordable care for the elderly and disabled  
17 who suffer from chronic disease and comorbidity; the private sector  
18 has established a model for successful reforms by negotiating  
19 discounts on prescription drugs and by coordinating care with  
20 disease management, drug utilization review, and patient education  
21 programs, all of which aid in ameliorating medical problems; and

22           WHEREAS, Despite the growing needs of the Medicare  
23 population, the United States Congress has thus far failed to  
24 remedy the inadequacies of the Medicare program; effective reform

1 would adopt the successful strategies of the private sector and use  
2 the marketplace to foster competition among private plans,  
3 maintaining the financial viability of the program and offering  
4 greater choice of quality coverage to seniors and the disabled; and

5 WHEREAS, Instead, the lack of a prescription drug benefit in  
6 particular has forced states to supplement Medicare by providing  
7 medicine to vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries through state  
8 Medicaid programs; this "dually eligible" population, those who  
9 qualify for federal Medicare and state Medicaid, accounts for 42  
10 percent of Medicaid drug expenditures nationwide; and

11 WHEREAS, The situation is critical in Texas, where the  
12 Congressional Budget Office reported the enactment of a Medicare  
13 drug benefit would mean a savings of nearly \$2 billion in Medicaid  
14 funds between 2005 and 2012; alarmingly, the costs to state  
15 Medicaid programs are expected to increase as the non-elderly  
16 disabled and the elderly over age 85 who are most likely to be  
17 dually eligible are the fastest growing populations within  
18 Medicare; and

19 WHEREAS, With state Medicaid programs already facing serious  
20 budgetary constraints that threaten to restrict patients' access to  
21 needed medical care and prescription drugs, it is more important  
22 than ever that the congress enact a Medicare prescription drug  
23 benefit as quickly as possible; now, therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas  
25 hereby respectfully request that the Congress of the United States  
26 enact financially sustainable, voluntary, universal, and privately  
27 administered outpatient prescription drug coverage as part of the

1 federal Medicare program; and, be it further

2           RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
3 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to  
4 the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the  
5 senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the  
6 Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this  
7 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a  
8 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.