

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 271

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that public awareness and education about the importance of health care coverage is of the utmost priority and that a National Importance of Health Care Coverage Month should be established to promote these goals.

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Whereas census estimates indicate that some 42 million Americans are without health insurance coverage, many of whom are among the most vulnerable of American citizens who can be financially devastated by serious illness, disease, or accident;

Whereas studies have shown that people with health insurance are healthier than those who are uninsured and re-

ceive care through emergency rooms or safety net health care services, because the insured are entitled to, and receive, more preventive care, follow-up care, and care for chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure;

Whereas over 17.3 million of the uninsured are employed, but are not offered health insurance through their employers;

Whereas such employers are small business owners who are often unaware of the benefits of offering insurance, including the fact that it is tax deductible, that it helps to reduce employee turnover, and that it helps to reduce employee sick days;

Whereas over 16 million people, more than one-third of the uninsured, are in families where at least one member of the family has been offered employer based health care coverage but has turned it down;

Whereas many citizens are eligible for public assistance programs such as the State Children's Health Insurance Program, known as SCHIP, and the Medicaid program, but are not currently enrolled due primarily to lack of outreach, education, and accessible enrollment processes;

Whereas studies have shown that many citizens and small businesses are unaware of the various options they have for obtaining affordable health care coverage;

Whereas surveys have shown that many individuals who cite expense as the reason for not purchasing insurance find it to be affordable once they are informed of the true cost of various options; and

Whereas education about health care coverage helps uninsured citizens and employers to understand the critical value of health insurance as a preventive measure, as well

as the ways to keep their health insurance premiums manageable once they have health care coverage: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) a National Importance of Health Care Cov-
 4 erage Month should be established to promote a
 5 multifaceted educational effort about the importance
 6 of health care coverage, and to increase awareness of
 7 the many available health care coverage options, and
 8 should include efforts to inform those eligible for
 9 public insurance programs of how to access those
 10 programs; and

11 (2) the President should issue a proclamation
 12 calling on the Federal Government, States, localities,
 13 citizens, and businesses of the United States to con-
 14 duct appropriate programs, fairs, ceremonies, and
 15 activities to promote this educational effort.

Passed the House of Representatives May 7, 2002.

Attest:

Clerk.