

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 41

Directing the Congress to enact legislation by October 2005 that provides access to comprehensive health care for all Americans.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2003

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. CORZINE, and Mr. FEINGOLD) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Directing the Congress to enact legislation by October 2005 that provides access to comprehensive health care for all Americans.

Whereas the United States has the most expensive health care system in the world in terms of absolute costs, per capita costs, and percentage of gross domestic product (GDP);

Whereas, despite being first in spending, the World Health Organization has ranked the United States 37th among all nations in terms of meeting the needs of its people;

Whereas 42,000,000 Americans, including 8,000,000 children, are uninsured;

Whereas tens of millions more Americans are inadequately insured, including medicare beneficiaries who lack access to prescription drug coverage and long term care coverage;

Whereas racial, income, and ethnic disparities in access to care threaten communities across the country, particularly communities of color;

Whereas health care costs continue to increase, jeopardizing the health security of working families and small businesses;

Whereas dollars that could be spent on health care are being used for administrative costs instead of patient needs;

Whereas the current health care system too often puts the bottom line ahead of patient care and threatens safety net providers who treat the uninsured and poorly insured; and

Whereas any health care reform must ensure that health care providers and practitioners are able to provide patients with the quality care they need: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
 2 *concurring)*, That Congress shall enact legislation by Octo-
 3 ber 2005 to guarantee that every person in the United
 4 States, regardless of income, age, or employment or health
 5 status, has access to health care that—

6 (1) is affordable to individuals and families,
 7 businesses and taxpayers and that removes financial
 8 barriers to needed care;

9 (2) is as cost efficient as possible, spending the
 10 maximum amount of dollars on direct patient care;

1 (3) provides comprehensive benefits, including
2 benefits for mental health and long term care serv-
3 ices;

4 (4) promotes prevention and early intervention;

5 (5) includes parity for mental health and other
6 services;

7 (6) eliminates disparities in access to quality
8 health care;

9 (7) addresses the needs of people with special
10 health care needs and underserved populations in
11 rural and urban areas;

12 (8) promotes quality and better health out-
13 comes;

14 (9) addresses the need to have adequate num-
15 bers of qualified health care caregivers, practi-
16 tioners, and providers to guarantee timely access to
17 quality care;

18 (10) provides adequate and timely payments in
19 order to guarantee access to providers;

20 (11) fosters a strong network of health care fa-
21 cilities, including safety net providers;

22 (12) ensures continuity of coverage and con-
23 tinuity of care;

24 (13) maximizes consumer choice of health care
25 providers and practitioners; and

- 1 (14) is easy for patients, providers and practi-
- 2 tioners to use and reduces paperwork.

