

acquired infections. Studies have documented that the longer a patient remains in the hospital the greater the chance of developing a new infection due to an organism acquired in the hospital; this results in increased morbidity and mortality, longer hospital stays, and additional costs. Another benefit of outpatient therapy is that patients who are ambulatory and active can often resume work or other regular activities during the period of their treatment.

Several models are used for the administration of outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy. These include, first, the therapy can be administered in a physician's office or hospital treatment room to a patient who commutes to the site daily. This type of outpatient treatment is already covered by Medicare because the drugs are administered incident to a physician's services. Second, the therapy can be administered in a patient's home by a health professional who visits daily. Third, the therapy can be self-administered by the patient after appropriate training and with appropriate backup and support services. Fourth, the therapy can be administered via a programmable infusion pump in a patient's home or other location since some pumps are small and portable. Pumps can be set up to run for a few days by a health professional and require little manipulation by patients. They can be used with a variety of antimicrobials, including ones with frequent dosing schedules which otherwise could not be feasibly administered in the outpatient setting.

Some infectious disease specialists treat a variety of infections with outpatient intravenous antimicrobial therapy in addition to the ones I mentioned earlier. These include certain skin and soft tissue infections, kidney infections, and pneumonia. I invite medical experts to help us define the optimal list of diseases for which outpatient parenteral therapy is a safe, effective, and cost-effective alternative to inpatient treatment. Because Medicare savings may be more readily identified with some disease categories than others, I encourage development of a list for which the savings are clear.

The bill I am introducing today establishes a benefit for outpatient parenteral antimicrobial drugs, when the outpatient treatment is used in place of continued inpatient treatment. Reimbursement for drugs will be on the basis of actual costs plus an appropriate administration fee. The bill recognizes that certain supplies, equipment, and professional services are a necessary part of appropriate outpatient treatment. It directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to determine the savings that can be obtained by providing this outpatient benefit which facilitates reduced inpatient payments. The diseases for which inpatient payments can be reduced if outpatient benefits are provided will be determined by reviewing all infectious disease DRG's.

The bill also calls for repeal of coverage for antimicrobial drugs under the durable medical equipment [DME] clause, and provision of the coverage under the new outpatient parenteral therapy benefit. The DME benefit currently covers three antiviral drugs, one antifungal drug, and one anti-bacterial drug called vancomycin. As I have described previously in introducing another bill addressing vancomycin policy, Medicare's coverage of this single antibacterial drug among more than 50 available antibacterials is causing inappropriate overuse of this drug. This is contributing to a public

health problem of vancomycin resistant bacteria. Incorporating these five antimicrobials into the new outpatient parenteral therapy benefit will provide a more rational policy that can avoid the pitfalls of the current system. Coverage for infusion pumps used to administer these and other antimicrobials covered by the outpatient parenteral therapy benefit will be provided under the DME benefit.

This bill focuses on disease categories rather than specific antimicrobials. As evident from the vancomycin issue, the naming of specific antimicrobials can cause changes in physicians' prescribing practices resulting in overuse of the named drugs. The naming of antimicrobials poses a different risk than for other classes of drugs and should be avoided; if we guess wrong about which antimicrobials should be named in a law, the result is not merely lack of coverage for the unnamed drugs, but also a potential public health problem of increased drug resistance. The legislative process cannot respond fast enough to change the list of drugs each time a problem occurs. Focusing on disease categories, rather than naming specific drugs, avoids this special risk. Also, this strategy helps to ensure Medicare savings by clearly identifying the DRG's, outliers, and extended care categories for which reduced inpatient payments may be feasible. This bill provides the mechanism to update Medicare's policies and capture cost-savings as healthcare shifts from the inpatient to the outpatient arena.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3666,
DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPRO-
PRIATIONS ACT, 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL ORTON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 24, 1996

Mr. ORTON. Mr. Speaker, with the passage of the VA/HUD appropriations bill in the House and Senate and expected approval by the President, I am very pleased to note the enactment into law of important FHA reforms, which will improve and enhance the program.

The first reform is the elimination of the current prohibition against parental loans in conjunction with FHA mortgages. In spite of the fact that parental financial assistance plays an important role in meeting down payment requirements and promoting homeownership, current FHA rules do not permit parents to lend money to their children for this purpose. This prohibition is antihomeworking and antifamily. I am pleased to see Congress adopt my proposal and allow parental loans, on either a secured or unsecured basis, for this purpose.

The second reform would allow direct endorsement lenders to issue their own mortgage certificates. This will lower costs for lenders and for FHA which can be passed along to borrowers in the form of lower premiums and lower loan costs. Since direct endorsement lenders are already given underwriting authority, this change will not negatively affect the quality of loans approved. This proposal was adopted 2 years ago in the House, and

was included in my FHA reform bill introduced at the beginning of this Congress.

The third reform is the establishment of an FHA down payment simplification proposal on a demonstration basis in Alaska and Hawaii. This proposal is based on my down payment proposal which was adopted in the Banking Committee in 1994. Virtually everyone who uses FHA acknowledges that the current down payment calculation is unnecessarily complex. This proposal would greatly simplify the process for borrowers, lenders, and realtors.

I am disappointed that the Senate prevailed over the House on this issue, scaling back nationwide application to a demonstration project. However, I am pleased that Congress has finally acknowledged that we ought to take action on this issue. My hope is that next year, we can expand this demonstration status to the entire Nation and make it permanent.

And, I would like to acknowledge the efforts and leadership of Representative WELLER's amendment to codify the lowering of the FHA premium from 2.25 percent to 2 percent for first-time home buyers who receive homeownership counseling. This continues a trend over the last 4 years of lowering FHA premiums, as a result of lowered FHA loss rates and reductions in administrative costs.

These legislative changes represent a great achievement, in light of the fact that it now appears that no comprehensive housing legislation will be enacted this Congress.

The passage of these provisions is especially noteworthy, in light of the great number of House Members who are opposed to FHA. Early last year, legislation was introduced which would have effectively eliminated FHA. This legislation was supported by 60 House Members including many in leadership positions, such as Majority Leader DICK ARMEY and Majority Whip TOM DELAY. A companion bill was introduced in the Senate.

Not only were FHA proponents able to repel this effort to destroy FHA, but we were able to improve the program through much-needed reforms. These reforms are critically important in my home State of Utah and throughout the country. A recent Fannie Mae study cited the required downpayment as the No. 1 impediment to home ownership in this country. FHA, with its low downpayment provisions, is the most effective and widely available mortgage tool used to help young families and individuals overcome that downpayment hurdle. And, it does so at no cost to the taxpayer.

In fact, a recent GAO study showed that 77 percent of first-time home buyers who used FHA loans in 1995 would not have qualified for a loan without FHA. In my home State of Utah, 68 percent of first-time home buyers use FHA. Thus, in Utah, over half of first-time home buyers would not be able to enter the housing market without FHA.

These statistics clearly show the folly of proposals to end or privatize FHA. They also show how critical it is to continue to improve and modernize the program.

Therefore, it is my hope that next year, we can finish the job we started back in the 103d Congress. Specifically, we should extend the demonstration downpayment simplification proposal to nationwide status, raise the national FHA loan floor to 50 percent of the Fannie Mae/Freddie Mac limit, allow the use of two-step mortgages, and eliminate the outdated 90 percent loan-to-value limitation on new construction.

In closing, I would like to thank House and Senate conferees for preserving these important FHA reforms in the final conference report, and look forward to their implementation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD ON THE SUCCESSFUL CROSS-DECKING OF THE CUTTER "DECISIVE" AND THE CUTTER "RESOLUTE"

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, my good friend Maj. F. Andy Messing of the National Defense Council Foundation has asked me to submit these speeches for the RECORD.

Congressman DAN BURTON congratulates the U.S. Coast Guard on the successful cross-decking of the cutter *Decisive* and the cutter *Resolute*. The two speeches herein show the dedicated service to our country. Particularly, they illustrate the antidrug missions, the life-saving actions and environmental deeds done for America.

SPEECH OF CDR. AL J. BERNARD—COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE USCGC "RESOLUTE"

Admiral Barrett, Captain Hested, Capt Hail, Chaplain Michener, other distinguished guests, former *Decisive* Co's and sailors, Team Coast Guard, friends and family of the Coast Guard, Good Morning:

Thank you all for coming today to share in this very special ceremony. For many of us, work is a routine of shuffling paper, long hours in front of a computer screen or toiling through highway congested traffic from home to work and back. It's a far cry from the dreams we had as kids. We day dreamed of being astronauts, explorers, major league baseball players, or even running off to sea. For the men and women you see before you the childhood notion of going to sea is a reality and remains intact. They sail the briny for love of country and for the ideals it represents.

Therefore, a ship carries a very special meaning to a sailor. The ships you see behind me represent work, home, school, family, and church for this crew. It is life personified on a floating hull of steel. It takes on the character of its crew and becomes a sacred and noble entity because these ships are their blood, sweat and tears—the very attributes which bring a ship to life. Today, you have witnessed a transfusion of life from *Decisive* to *Resolute*. *Decisive* will always be a part of us. But now we are *resolute*; and what a desirable trait of human character to be—one especially suited for this crew and her mission. Implied by the word "resolute" are steadfastness, courage, and tenacity of purpose. To be *resolute* is to continue one's task in the face of great obstacles. It is one of the foundations of character. Without this quality, neither man nor nation can survive.

But that's only half of the story. These ships of steel and their crews must endure the hardship and punishment that the sea offers without regard. Since the beginning of time, sailors have relied on the sailmaker, carpenter, ship fitter, and dock yard; these craftsmen ensured that the vessels they built or repaired were reliable and intact. The dock yards kept the mighty triremes, galleons, barks and cutters fit for service so that the crews could serve. They provided the sailor with piece of mind when he set for sea.

Today, you see yet another example of that relationship between sailor and ship

yard. The Coast Guard Yard has delivered another ship of the line in tip top condition from stem to stern, top to bottom, and ready for action. Captain Hested, please accept my sincere thanks from the crew of *Decisive*, and now *Resolute*, for a job well done. Your team has done it again.

Thirty years ago, *Resolute* was launched from this very yard contributing to the Coast Guard's unbroken line of development extending over two centuries. As you look at *Resolute* down the pier, you'll see her clean, sweeping lines, a new look if you will, and a metaphor for the renewed vitality which is surging in our service. This "new cutter" incorporates all the latest advances in naval engineering and demonstrates our commitment to the growing needs of our times. For while I stand here and talk of time honored tradition and service, the Coast Guard recognizes that change is inevitable, if we are to keep up with the demands of progress.

Let me end here by telling you that the crew is ready to begin a new chapter in the rich history of cutter *Resolute*. The American novelist, Arthur Somers Roche, captures the very essence of why these men and women do what they do, and do it so well:

But the men who sail the ocean
In wormy, rotten craft,
With a hell-blown gale baft;
When the mainmast cracks and topples,
And she's lurching in the trough,
Them's the guys that greets the cutter
With smiles that won't come off.

Thank you so much for coming.

SPEECH OF REAR ADM. ED BARNETT, U.S.
COAST GUARD

Captain Hested, Captain Hail, Commander Bernard, men and women of *Decisive*, men and women of the yard, family and friends. A special welcome to two former *Decisive* CO's, Capt. Mark Fisher and Capt. Rich Hartman—good morning. It is a pleasure to be here today representing the Commandant as we mark a key transition point for the cutters *Decisive* and *Resolute* and for the one crew which soon will have sailed both of these vessels.

Appropriately, this ceremony is held in Curtis Bay, a city rich in maritime history, and specifically at the Coast Guard yard, a facility which has contributed much to the birth and lifeline of so many Coast Guard vessels.

As you know, there are many significant events in the life of a cutter . . . christening, commissioning, changes of command and finally decommissioning. The Coast Guard cutter *Decisive* was christened here at the CG yard in January 1968, and later commissioned in August 1968 in her first homeport, New Castle, New Hampshire.

Since that time, during the past 28 years, *Decisive* has carved a proud niche in Coast Guard history.

Her missions have been wide ranging. In the forefront are search and rescue and law enforcement operations in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. In carrying out these missions, as well as her other duties, *Decisive* has excelled.

I would like to recap a few of these missions which occurred over the past couple of years.

1. Aug 94 First CTU 44.7.9 for the Florida Straits Cuban Sealift; rescued approximately 500 Cubans from unseaworthy craft; overall in 1994 *Decisive* rescued 1,400 Cuban and Haitian migrants.

2. Nov 95 Sank M/V Juneau Express during t/s Gordon near Florida Keys live coral reef. Fired approx 600 rounds hit 25mm between midnight and 0300 to sink abandoned 200' freighter in high winds/seas and prevent damage to a fragile eco system.

3. Mar-May 95 Coordinated Maritime element for exercise tradewinds 95, a USACOM

sponsored annual nation building effort. Trained police and Coast Guard forces from 13 Caribbean Nations.

4. Nov 95 Interdicted 75' Haitian coastal freighter with 516 Haitian migrants in windward pass. Assisted CGC northland w/safe offload in the vicinity of Cay Sal Bank, w/o injury or loss of life.

Decisive's effort in law enforcement are matched by few Coast Guard cutters . . . she has logged thousands of helicopter landings, seized dozens of vessels, and as evident by the marijuana symbols on the stack. She has seized over 500,000 lbs of marijuana.

To the crew of *Decisive* . . . I'm sure you are or will be experiencing a wide range of feelings as you depart *Decisive* which has been your home, and from which you performed your duties with the highest degree of professionalism.

For CDR Bernard, it may occur as you order the OOD to haul down the commissioning pennant.

For the engineers, it may have occurred as you secured the main diesels.

For others, it may be as you finish emptying your lockers and cross the brow for this final mooring.

A lot of memories will surface . . . good times in Caribbean liberty ports, search and rescue cases in rough seas, climbing over the gunwales during fisheries boardings, the thrill of a drug seizure, the watches you've stood . . . and always, the memories of sailors with which you've served.

Don't be surprised if you also have a feeling of emptiness . . . because a part of each of you will remain with *Decisive*. It has been your knowledge, dedication, hard work, and perseverance that have allowed *Decisive* to continue to operate effectively . . . long after she should have entered a major maintenance availability. As a team, you have given *Decisive* your best, and in return she has served you and the Coast Guard well.

Now, on the other hand, you will be surprised at how quickly you will build a similar bond with your new ship . . . *Resolute*. The craftsmen of the Coast Guard yard have once again done a masterful job . . . the 210' MMA program has turned out to be a real success story for the CG . . . with the employees of the yard providing quality products, ahead of schedule and >\$50M under cost. An excellent example of "better Government at less cost." You will acquire from the yard much more than a refurbished ship . . . you will have a new Coast Guard cutter with many modifications designed to both improve operational capability and decrease M/H required for maintenance. The deck department will undoubtedly miss the pleasurable chore of scrubbing *Decisive's* stern. . .

The caretaking of *Resolute's* heritage will soon be passed to you . . . her new crew. You are inheriting a ship that has an equally rich history. As with *Decisive*, *Resolute* was built by the Coast Guard yard. *Resolute's* history began in 1966 in San Francisco, CA, under the command of a young commander named Paul A. Yost, whom would later become our commandant.

Resolute's law enforcement accomplishments are also impressive. She too has seized dozens of ships—but on the "other" coast. And, while not as glamorous as drug seizures, she has admirably performed thousands of fisheries boardings, which have protected our ocean's dwindling fish stocks from exploitation and has provided fishermen with the latest information on F/V safety requirements.

She has served our country with distinction.

And so, through you, *Resolute's* history begins again. In June, you successfully completed her builder's trials. The stage is set. *Resolute* will require your skill and hard