

EXPANDING HEALTH CARE
COVERAGE FOR CALIFORNIANS

• Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I commend the Senate for approving last night, at my urging, H.R. 3056, which makes a small change in Federal law to enable a California county that operates a Medicaid managed care plan to provide services to Medicaid beneficiaries in another county. This bill, introduced by Congressman FRANK RIGGS, is needed because the Health Care Financing Administration concluded that current law limits coverage under these county-operated plans solely to the county in which an organization operates.

This bill was requested by Solano and Napa Counties in California so that Solano County could expand its Health Partnership Plan to Napa County, thus providing care to 12,000 individuals. Currently, these Medicaid beneficiaries have "hit or miss" health care. Some are refused care by private physicians. The health care they do get is inconsistent and unreliable. Many end up in emergency rooms when illnesses are exacerbated and care is expensive. When Solano started its plan, emergency room visits were cut in half the first year because Medicaid beneficiaries were linked up with a primary care physician. This resulted in major savings.

In short, this bill will mean more access, more care and better health.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bill could save up to \$500,000 per year.

The bill is supported by Gov. Pete Wilson, the California Department of Health Services, and the Solano and Napa County Boards of Supervisors.

I thank Senators LOTT, DASCHLE, ROTH, and MOYNIHAN for their help in moving this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support it. •

A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE
YEAR 2000 COMPUTER PROBLEM

• Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, yesterday I introduced S. 2131, a bill to establish a bipartisan National Commission on the Year 2000 Computer Problem. I ask that the permanent RECORD be changed to include the text of the bill at the beginning of my remarks. I further ask that the title of my remarks yesterday be corrected to read "A National Commission on The Year 2000 Computer Problem."

The text of the bill follows:

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.—(A) This title may be cited as the "Commission on the Year 2000 Computer Problem Act."

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following findings:

(A) Whereas the Congress of the United States recognizes the existence of a severe computer problem that may have extreme negative economic and national security consequences in the year 2000 and beyond.

(B) Whereas most computer programs (particularly in mainframes) in both the public and private sector express dates with only two digits and assume the first two digits are "19", and that therefore most programs read 00-01-01 as January 1, 1900; and that these programs will not recognize the year 2000 or the 21st century without a massive rewriting of codes.

(C) Whereas the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has completed a report on the implications of the "Year 2000 Computer Problem" and according to CRS, each line of computer code will need to be analyzed and either passed on or be rewritten and this worldwide problem could cost as much as \$600 billion to repair. We recognize that no small share of the American burden will fall on the shoulders of the Federal Government and on State and local governments.

(D) Whereas six issues need to be addressed:

(1) an analysis of the history and background concerning the reasons for the occurrence of the Year 2000 problem;

(2) the cost of reviewing and rewriting codes for both the Federal and State governments over the next 3 years, including a legal analysis of responsibilities for such costs and possible equitable bases for sharing them;

(3) the time it will take to get the job done and, if not by 2000, what agencies are at risk of not being able to perform basic services;

(4) the development of balanced and sound contracts with the computer industry available for use by Federal agencies, and if such outside contractual assistance is needed, to assist such agencies in contracting for and effectuating Year 2000 compliance for current computer programs and systems as well to ensure Year 2000 compliance for all programs and systems acquired in the future;

(5) an analysis of what happens to the United States economy if the problem is not resolved by mid-1999;

(6) recommendations to the President and the Congress concerning lessons to be learned and policies and actions to be taken in the future to minimize the Year 2000 public and private sector costs and risks.

(E) Whereas the Congress recognizes that an Executive Branch Interagency Committee has been established to raise awareness of this problem and facilitate efforts at solving it; but that in order to best minimize the impact and cost of this problem, and recognizing the extreme urgency of this problem, this bipartisan commission will be established to both address these issues and take responsibility for assuring that all Federal agencies be computer compliant by January 1, 1999.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—(A) There is established a commission to be known as the "National Commission on the Year 2000 Computer Problem" (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "Commission"). The Commission shall be composed of 15 members appointed or designated by the President and selected as follows:

(1) Five members selected by the President from among officers or employees of the Ex-

ecutive Branch, private citizens of the United States, or both. Not more than three of the members selected by the President shall be members of the same political party;

(2) Five members selected by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, in consultation with the Majority and Minority Leaders, from among officers or employers of the Senate, private citizens of the United States, or both. Not more than three of the members selected by the President Pro Tempore shall be members of the same political party;

(3) Five members selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in consultation with the Majority and Minority Leaders, from among members of the House, private citizens of the United States, or both. Not more than three of the members selected by the Speaker shall be members of the same political party.

(B) The President shall designate a Chairman from among the members of the Commission.

SEC. 4. FUNCTION OF COMMISSION.—(A) It shall be the function of the Commission to conduct a study on the historical, current and long term condition of computer programs as they relate to date fields and the year 2000; identify problems that threaten the proper functions of computers as the public and private sectors approach the 21st Century; analyze potential solutions to such problems that will address the brief time there remains to meet this problem, the substantial cost of reviewing and rewriting codes, and the shared responsibilities for such costs; and provide appropriate recommendations (including potential balanced and sound contracts with the computer industry available for use by Federal agencies) to the Secretary of Defense (as this is a matter of National Security), the President and the Congress.

(B) the Commission shall submit to Congress a final report containing such recommendations concerning the Year 2000 Computer problem; including proposing new procedures, rules, regulations, or legislation that is needed to ensure the proper transition of the computers of the Federal Government and local and State governments from the year 1999 to the year 2000.

(C) the Commission shall make its report to the President by December 31, 1997.

SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION.—(A) The heads of Executive Agencies shall, to the extent permitted by law, provide the Commission such information as it may require for the purpose of carrying out its functions.

(B) Members of the Commission shall serve without any additional compensation for their work on the Commission.

(C) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—While away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission, members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses including per diem in lieu of substance, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(D) The Commission shall have a staff headed by an Executive Director. Any expenses of the Commission shall be paid from such funds as may be available to the Secretary of Defense.