

bond requirement for home health agencies, Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers, rehabilitation services providers and ambulance services. The law was aimed at fly-by-night home health agencies and DME providers who abuse the system, and not small rural pharmacies. Unfortunately, these pharmacies have been caught up in this broadly written provision of last year's budget reconciliation.

Under the definitions incorporated in this surety bond provision, all pharmacies are considered to be DME providers if even a small portion of their business is DME-related. Thus, they must obtain a minimum \$50,000 surety bond regardless of how much or how little of their business consists of providing durable medical equipment to Medicare beneficiaries.

The surety bond requirement is intended to ensure that the federal government will have recourse in the event of fraud. Many of the perpetrators of fraud and abuse are fly-by-night organizations that can quickly disappear. Many rural pharmacies, however, only offer DME as a service to their Medicare patients. It is not a major profit center for them, and many will stop providing this service rather than undergo the expense of obtaining a minimum \$50,000 bond. Rural Medicare patients would then have greater difficulty in obtaining needed DME.

The surety bond requirement attacks fraud indirectly, by mandating financial accountability. Pharmacies engaging in fraud will still be liable for their actions. This bill would clarify that the federal surety bond requirement does not apply to licensed pharmacies. It allows states to enforce their own licensing requirements, which can include surety bonds if states feel it necessary.

Mr. President, while we must continue our efforts to root out the fraud and abuse that is plaguing our Medicare system, this important clarification will help ensure that our efforts are appropriately targeted and do not have the unintended consequence of denying critical services to Medicare beneficiaries, and I urge my colleagues to support our efforts and to support this bill.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, it is my pleasure today to join my colleagues, Senator DORGAN, Senator CONRAD and Senator JOHNSON, in introducing legislation to clarify that licensed pharmacists are not subject to a surety bond requirement under the Medicare program. This bill will help ensure continued access to durable medical equipment (DME) in rural areas for those covered by Medicare.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 requires that all DME suppliers purchase a surety to qualify for a supplier number. The minimum amount for the bond is \$50,000. The Health Care Financing Administration has estimated that these bonds will cost about \$788 per year for each supplier. Many South Dakota pharmacists do not take in sufficient revenue from Medicare DME

sales to support the purchase of a bond. Therefore, the surety bond requirement in the Balanced Budget Act could severely compromise the availability of services for Medicare patients in rural areas.

The surety bond requirement was established as an important way to combat Medicare fraud and abuse. I remain in strong support of efforts to combat fraud and abuse, because they are crucial to protecting and strengthening the Medicare program. Because the ultimate aim of fraud and abuse measures is to improve Medicare, they should be applied in ways that are consistent with the goal of quality health care and should not jeopardize access to necessary services and supplies.

This legislation retains the surety bond requirement for many DME suppliers, but it exempts licensed pharmacists. This policy is not only logical in terms of fairness to these pharmacists; it is the right thing to do for the beneficiaries who depend on their services.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this amendment to title XVIII of the Social Security Act. It will lift an unreasonable burden from small pharmacists without jeopardizing fraud and abuse prevention efforts, and it will enable pharmacists to continue to provide quality health care services in their local communities.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1096

At the request of Mr. KERREY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1096, a bill to restructure the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

S. 1283

At the request of Mr. BUMPERS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1283, a bill to award Congressional gold medals to Jean Brown Trickey, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Melba Patillo Beals, Terrence Roberts, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Thelma Mothershed Wair, Ernest Green, Elizabeth Eckford, and Jefferson Thomas, commonly referred collectively as the "Little Rock Nine" on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the integration of the Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

S. 1308

At the request of Mr. BREAUX, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1308, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure taxpayer confidence in the fairness and independence of the taxpayer problem resolution process by providing a more independently operated Office of the Taxpayer Advocate, and for other purposes.

S. 1314

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr.

BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1314, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that married couples may file a combined return under which each spouse is taxed using the rates applicable to unmarried individuals.

S. 1334

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1334, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to establish a demonstration project to evaluate the feasibility of using the Federal Employees Health Benefits program to ensure the availability of adequate health care for Medicare-eligible beneficiaries under the military health care system.

S. 1389

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1389, a bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to allow postal patrons to contribute to funding for prostate cancer research through the voluntary purchase of certain specially issued United States postage stamps.

S. 1606

At the request of Mr. WELLSTONE, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1606, a bill to fully implement the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to provide a comprehensive program of support for victims of torture.

S. 1631

At the request of Mr. HUTCHINSON, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to amend the General Education Provisions Act to allow parents access to certain information.

S. 1644

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1644, a bill to amend subpart 4 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding Grants to States for State Student Incentives.

S. 1647

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES), the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR), and the Senator from New York (Mr. D'AMATO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1647, a bill to reauthorize and make reforms to programs authorized by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965.

#### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 30

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), and the Senator from

North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) were added as cosponsors of Senate Joint Resolution 30, a joint resolution designating March 1, 1998 as "United States Navy Asiatic Fleet Memorial Day", and for other purposes.

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 40

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Joint Resolution 40, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of Senate Joint Resolution 40, *supra*.

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 30

At the request of Mr. HELMS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. GRAMS) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 30, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the Republic of China should be admitted to multilateral economic institutions, including the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 74

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 74, a bill expressing the sense of the Congress relating to the European Union's ban of United States beef and the World Trade Organization's ruling concerning that ban.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 148

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 148, a resolution designating 1998 as the "Onate Cuartocentenario", the 400th anniversary commemoration of the first permanent Spanish settlement in New Mexico.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 155

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 155, a resolution designating April 6 of each year as "National Tartan Day" to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 171

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. MACK), and the Senator

from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 171, a resolution designating March 25, 1998, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy".

## SENATE RESOLUTION 176

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. FORD), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 176, a resolution proclaiming the week of October 18 through October 24, 1998, as "National Character Counts Week".

## SENATE RESOLUTION 179

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 179, a resolution relating to the indictment and prosecution of Saddam Hussein for war crimes and other crimes against humanity.

SENATE RESOLUTION 181—  
CONCERNING MARCH 2ND

Mr. ROBB, (for himself and Mr. JEFFORDS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

## S. RES. 181

Whereas reading is a basic skill for a quality education, a requirement for a successful life's work, and a source of pleasure throughout life;

Whereas reading ability is essential to our nation's ability to remain competitive in a global economy;

Whereas the American Library Association, the National Family Literacy Council, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, Reading Is Fundamental, the International Reading Association, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and others have joined with the National Education Association to use March 2 as a national day to celebrate reading; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) March 2, 1998 shall be known as "Read Across America Day" to focus on the basic component of learning; and

(2) every child should be in the company of someone who will read to him or her on March 2, Dr. Seuss's birthday; and

(3) the success of Dr. Seuss and many others like him in encouraging children to discover the joy of books is applauded; and

(4) all parents are encouraged to read with their children for at least one half hour on March 2 in honor of Dr. Seuss to help us realize the goal of having the best readers in the world.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 182—HONORING THE MEMORY OF HARRY CARAY

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN (for herself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

## S. RES. 182

Whereas for more than 50 years, Harry Caray enthusiastically provided a unique vi-

sion of baseball in his broadcasting of thousands of games, first for the St. Louis Cardinals, then the Oakland Athletics, followed by the Chicago White Sox, and finally the Chicago Cubs;

Whereas Harry Caray was born in St. Louis in 1914, orphaned at the age of 4, and raised by family friends in St. Louis;

Whereas Harry Caray began his professional baseball broadcasting career in 1944 for the St. Louis Cardinals, and spent 25 years calling Cardinal games;

Whereas in 1971 Harry Caray began his 11 year stint with the Chicago White Sox where, in 1978, he began the tradition of leading the fans in the singing of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" during the 7th inning stretch;

Whereas in 1982 Harry Caray moved to the broadcast booth for the Chicago Cubs, a switch that would eventually make Mr. Caray a national celebrity thanks to the popularity of the Cubs on cable television;

Whereas in the winter of 1987, Harry Caray suffered a stroke and for the first time in his career missed the broadcast of an opening day game, and yet, he never talked of retiring from the game he loved and soon was back in the booth at Wrigley Field;

Whereas the uncharacteristic honesty of Harry Caray made him immensely popular with fans;

Whereas Harry Caray once said "My style is a very simple one, be entertaining, be informative and, of course, tell the truth. If you don't have the reputation for honesty, you just can't keep the respect of the listener.";

Whereas Harry Caray's exuberant voice and his trademark shout of "Holy Cow" are known to baseball fans across the Nation;

Whereas Harry Caray was inducted into the National Sportscasters and Sports-writers Hall of Fame in 1988, the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1989, and the National Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 1994;

Whereas Harry Caray became a major supporter of various Chicago organizations that supported and housed orphaned and troubled children;

Whereas on February 18, 1998, Harry Caray passed away after a long career enjoyed by millions; and

Whereas Harry Caray is survived by his wife of 22 years, 5 children, 5 stepchildren, 14 grandchildren and a great grandchild, and by baseball fans across the Nation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate honors the life of Harry Caray.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 183—CONGRATULATING NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. KERRY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

## S. RES. 183

Whereas on October 16, 1997, Northeastern University marked the beginning of its centennial celebration;

Whereas Northeastern University began providing higher education in conjunction with the Boston Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in 1898;

Whereas Northeastern University currently enrolls over 27,000 full time students and boasts an alumni in excess of 137,000 individuals;

Whereas Northeastern University has attained a national reputation for cooperative