

106<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 4549

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payment under the Medicare Program for ambulance services for the transportation of Medicare beneficiaries to certain rural outpatient facilities.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 25, 2000

Mr. ADERHOLT (for himself, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. RILEY, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. BALDACCI, and Mr. TOWNS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payment under the Medicare Program for ambulance services for the transportation of Medicare beneficiaries to certain rural outpatient facilities.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Medicare Ambulance  
5 Transportation Service Improvement Act of 2000”.

1 **SEC. 2. COVERAGE OF AMBULANCE SERVICES TO QUALI-**  
2 **FIED OUTPATIENT FACILITIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1861(e) of the Social Se-  
4 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(e)) is amended by adding at  
5 the end the following: “For purposes of subsection (s)(7),  
6 such term also includes a qualified outpatient facility (as  
7 defined in subsection (uu)).”.

8 (b) DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED OUTPATIENT FACIL-  
9 ITY.—Section 1861 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
10 1395x) is amended by adding at the end the following new  
11 subsection:

12 “Qualified Outpatient Facility

13 “(uu) The term ‘qualified outpatient facility’ means  
14 an outpatient facility located in a rural area (as defined  
15 in 1886(d)(2)(D)) that meets the following requirements:

16 “(1) SERVICES FURNISHED.—The facility fur-  
17 nishes some of the outpatient services furnished by  
18 a hospital, such as emergency services, diagnostic  
19 imaging, ambulatory surgery, catheterization lab,  
20 physicians’ services, wellness centers and health edu-  
21 cation libraries, urgent care, birthing services, lab-  
22 oratory, and other essential support services (includ-  
23 ing information and communication systems).

24 “(2) LIMITATION ON LENGTH OF STAY.—The  
25 length of stay permitted in the facility is less than  
26 24 hours.

1           “(3) EMERGENCY ROOM COVERAGE.—During  
2 the operating hours of the facility, the facility makes  
3 available emergency care services that are necessary  
4 for ensuring access to such services in the rural  
5 area.

6           “(4) TRANSFER AGREEMENTS.—The facility  
7 has an agreement with a hospital with respect to  
8 each of the following:

9                   “(A) Patient referral and transfer.

10                   “(B) The provision of emergency and non-  
11 emergency transportation between the facility  
12 and the hospital.

13                   “(C) Communications systems for sharing  
14 patient data.

15           “(5) PROTOCOLS WITH PROVIDERS OF AMBU-  
16 LANCES SERVICES.—The facility has established pro-  
17 tocols with providers of ambulance services to ensure  
18 that the transportation of individuals to the facility  
19 is limited to individuals with medical conditions that  
20 are suitable for treatment in the facility in accord-  
21 ance with a State medical control plan, or in the ab-  
22 sence of such a plan, in accordance with medical  
23 control guidelines established by the Secretary.

1           “(6) DESIGNATED NECESSARY RURAL PRO-  
2           VIDER.—The facility is located in one of the fol-  
3           lowing areas:

4                   “(A) An area designated (under section  
5                   332(a)(1)(A) of the Public Health Service Act)  
6                   as a health professional shortage area.

7                   “(B) A rural area designated by the Sec-  
8                   retary as medically underserved under section  
9                   330(b)(3) of the Public Health Service Act.

10                   “(C) A county in a State which has an un-  
11                   employment rate greater than the statewide av-  
12                   erage unemployment rate.

13                   “(D) A county in a State in which the per-  
14                   centage of residents aged 65 and older is great-  
15                   er than the statewide average percentage for  
16                   such residents.

17                   “(E) A county in a State in which the per-  
18                   centage of families with incomes below 200 per-  
19                   cent of the income official poverty line (as de-  
20                   fined by the Office of Management and Budget,  
21                   and revised annually in accordance with section  
22                   673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation  
23                   Act of 1981) applicable to a family of the size  
24                   involved is higher than the statewide average  
25                   for such families with such incomes.”.

1       (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
2 subsection (a) applies with respect to ambulance services  
3 furnished on or after the date of the enactment of this  
4 Act.

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