

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 49

Requiring a study and report on reducing discriminatory pricing of health services for the uninsured to improve access to needed health care services.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 17, 2001

Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. FRANK, and Mr. WEXLER) introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

JOINT RESOLUTION

Requiring a study and report on reducing discriminatory pricing of health services for the uninsured to improve access to needed health care services.

Whereas there are over 40 million Americans who are uninsured;

Whereas uninsured Americans are hospitalized at least 50 percent more often than the insured for avoidable hospital conditions, such as pneumonia and uncontrolled diabetes;

Whereas the uninsured are more likely to be diagnosed with later stage cancer than those with insurance;

Whereas newborn infants born to uninsured mothers have a 31 percent greater risk for adverse health outcomes be-

cause uninsured pregnant women often receive prenatal care later in their pregnancy;

Whereas insured Americans not only obtain direct benefits through health insurance, but also obtain discounts to charges otherwise imposed by health care providers;

Whereas Americans who are uninsured and who must pay for health care directly are denied access to these discounts and often face bills that are double or even triple the charges made in the case of the insured; and

Whereas this discriminatory treatment significantly and adversely affects the ability of uninsured Americans to obtain access to needed health services: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
 2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
 3 **SECTION 1. STUDY AND REPORT ON IMPROVING ACCESS**
 4 **TO HEALTH SERVICES BY THE UNINSURED**
 5 **BY REDUCING DISCRIMINATORY PRICING.**

6 (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Health and Human
 7 Services shall conduct a study regarding methods to im-
 8 prove access to (including the affordability of) health care
 9 services for uninsured individuals. Such study shall exam-
 10 ine differences in rates charged to such individuals com-
 11 pared to individuals who have health insurance and meth-
 12 ods for reducing or eliminating such differentials.

13 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
 14 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
 15 to Congress a report on the study conducted under sub-

1 section (a). The report shall include recommendations on
2 steps that may be taken to assure that uninsured individ-
3 uals are not charged more than a reasonable percentage
4 (such as 10 percent) above the rate charged by health care
5 providers to individuals who are insured.

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