

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 46th Legislature (1998)

HOUSE CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION NO. 1061

By: Hilliard

AS INTRODUCED

A Concurrent Resolution memorializing Congress to rescind provisions of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 related to an Interim Payment System and to suspend the implementation of other home care provisions in the act; providing for the development of certain amendments or changes in rules for Medicare home health beneficiaries; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the state Legislature of Oklahoma is concerned about the health and well-being of our elderly and disabled residents who now rely on the Medicare program to meet the cost of their health care needs; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma, like most other states throughout the county, anticipates an increasing population of seniors, disabled and others requiring health care services; and

WHEREAS, the state Legislature in Oklahoma recognizes that our residents should have access to high quality, cost-effective home health care services through the Medicare program wherever feasible and justified; and

WHEREAS, the federal Balanced Budget Act of 1997 included significant Medicare payment reforms affecting coverage in payment of home health services which create significant risks that access to Medicare home health services will be diminished or eliminated because the payment reform: bases payment rates on 1993 levels of care, fails to recognize changes in health care needs and services

since 1993 and fails to adequately account for the wide variation in care needs by individual patients; and

WHEREAS, Medicare beneficiaries who need care the most and are at the greatest risk for cutbacks are being denied access to care as the result of these payment reforms which discourage home health care agencies caring for patients with high-care needs that have high costs; and

WHEREAS, the cutback of home health services will lead to increased use of more costly settings like emergency rooms, hospitals and nursing homes as well as shifting an enormous burden to American families, especially women who are primary caregivers to most homebound patients; and

WHEREAS, home health agencies are an important source of employment in Oklahoma communities and cuts required under the new Medicare payment system will lead to the loss of employment by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Medicare home health cuts will likely shift service needs and costs to state Medicaid programs, especially nursing home care, resulting in an unfunded mandate to Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the portion of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 calling for an Interim Payment System was based on financial projections which overestimated the continued growth of home care; and

WHEREAS, the Interim Payment System provisions are therefor not needed to slow the growth of home care.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 46TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature recommends that the United States Congress rescind the Interim Payment System provisions and call upon Congress and the Administration to suspend the implementation of the other home care provisions of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and work jointly to develop any necessary

amendments or changes in rules in a manner which does not disrupt, interrupt or eliminate services to Medicare home health beneficiaries who need care to stay home safely.

THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation, the President of the United States and the Administrative Director of the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

46-2-9488

KSM