

Senate Resolution 49

By: Senators Thomas of the 54th, Smith of the 52nd, Moody of the 27th, Dean of the 31st, Crotts of the 17th and others

AS PASSED

A RESOLUTION

Requesting that the United States Congress enact a Medicare prescription drug benefit; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the use of prescription drugs improves the quality of care and helps patients live healthier, longer, and more productive lives while keeping them out of more costly acute care settings in the long term; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of new and improved prescription drugs has changed the delivery of health care in the United States since Medicare was enacted, and while two-thirds of the Medicare population has some form of prescription drug coverage, although it many times is inadequate, one-third of Medicare beneficiaries have no coverage at all; and

WHEREAS, Congress did not enact a drug benefit in the Medicare program; therefore, the program is inadequate in providing the elderly and disabled the most appropriate drug therapies and prevents the delivery of quality health care at an affordable cost; and

WHEREAS, the private sector provides affordable coverage by negotiating discounts on drugs and meeting the needs of special populations with chronic diseases and comorbidities through coordinating care with disease management, drug utilization review, and patient education programs, all of which aid in ameliorating medical errors; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive reform of the Medicare program would utilize the successful tools of the private sector in coordinating care for these populations and use the marketplace to foster competition among private plans, resulting in more choices of quality coverage for seniors and the disabled while maintaining the financial sustainability of the program; and

WHEREAS, Congress' inaction has failed to provide for comprehensive reform of Medicare, encouraging states to use their own resources to ease the burden of their elderly and disabled populations and effectively assume an unfunded informal mandate; and

WHEREAS, in implementing state programs to assist the Medicare population, state budgetary constraints can often result in the restriction and limitation of patients' access to needed prescription drugs and the enactment of anticompetitive price controls.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA that the members of this body request that the United States Congress enact financially sustainable, voluntary, universal, and privately administered outpatient prescription drug coverage as part of the federal Medicare program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Georgia congressional delegation.