

Reps. Hunter, Adamini, Anderson, Bieda, Brandenburg, Condino, Dennis, Elkins, Gaffney, Gielegghem, Gillard, Gleason, Hopgood, Lipsey, Reeves, Shaffer, Sheltroun, Spade, Tobocman, Vagnozzi, Waters, Zelenko, Accavitti, Brown, Byrum, Clack, Hood, Jamnick, Kolb, McConico, Murphy, Phillips, Rivet, Stallworth and Minore offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 160.

A resolution to memorialize Congress to revamp health insurance to address the needs of the uninsured, to safeguard Medicare and add prescription drug coverage, and to increase insurance program access for children.

Whereas, Our nation, the most powerful on earth, is hampered by the inadequacies of our current system of dealing with the health care needs of our people. With 43.6 million uninsured people, including those with full-time employment, a substantial and growing portion of our population is at risk; and

Whereas, The current system, which relies heavily on employers offering coverage, has not been effective in curtailing the steadily climbing costs. Pharmaceuticals alone are increasing in cost by approximately three times the rate of inflation, and Michigan's spending on prescription drugs is far above the national average. The rising costs are hampering the operations of many businesses and exhausting governmental resources. The many factors contributing to the cost of drugs include patent loopholes, impediments to the development of generic medicines, and unnecessary restrictions on the importation of FDA-approved medications; and

Whereas, As we debate the challenge of health care costs in state capitals and in Washington, it is appropriate to take note of initiatives that have proven successful. Community health centers have compiled an impressive record of helping uninsured Americans receive necessary care. Another key fact to bear in mind is the degree to which Medicare has proven to be an effective safety net for millions of seniors. While there is a clear need for prescription drug coverage, the overall integrity and stability of Medicare cannot be jeopardized by moves to incorporate a drug program. Moreover, retirees with these benefits through their former employers should not be adversely affected by any new prescription drug program; and

Whereas, Few issues touch more American lives than the multifaceted components of health insurance. With the resources and ingenuity among us, solving these challenges is clearly possible and in the best long-term interest of our country; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize Congress to revamp health insurance to address the needs of the uninsured, to safeguard Medicare and add prescription drug coverage, and to increase insurance program access for children. We call on Congress to help employers provide quality, affordable health insurance, to provide seniors with a prescription drug benefit within a strengthened Medicare system, to prevent Medicaid from becoming solely a block grant program, to encourage employers to maintain benefits for their retirees, to continue the work of community health centers, to expand access to children's insurance programs, and to address the health needs of the uninsured generally, including prescription drug programs; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.