

Senator George offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 106.

A resolution to memorialize the President, the Congress, and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to remove provisions from the final version of federal health care reform legislation that would increase financial obligations for Michigan and other states, whether through expanded Medicaid requirements or other mandates.

Whereas, As federal health care reform approaches its final stage, there remain many areas of serious concern. An issue drawing considerable attention in Michigan and across the country is the future expansion of Medicaid. It has been reported that states will be required to increase Medicaid eligibility to all nonelderly individuals below 133 percent of the federal poverty level and that the cost of covering this increase in eligibility will in significant measure be pushed off to the states in future years; and

Whereas, Michigan currently has 1.8 million people enrolled in its Medicaid program, almost 1 in 5 residents. This number continues to grow under current Medicaid eligibility standards, and the increase in Medicaid eligibility present in both versions of federal health care reform will almost certainly increase Michigan's Medicaid enrollment; and

Whereas, In order to secure sufficient votes to pass H.R. 3590 in the U.S. Senate, numerous deals were struck, including the insertion of one provision that favored one state, Nebraska, to the detriment of the other 49. This favoritism--solely for political expediency at the expense of fairness--is especially egregious as Michigan and many other states cope with budgetary perils more severe than any experienced in most Americans' lifetimes; and

Whereas, Michigan's multiyear economic crisis has placed a severe strain on the state budget and its social welfare programs. Based on recent revenue projections by the Michigan Department of Treasury, the Michigan House Fiscal Agency, and the Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency, Michigan is facing a potential \$1.3 billion to \$1.5 billion shortfall in General Fund dollars for fiscal year 2011; and

Whereas, The importance of health care to our nation, our citizens, our businesses, and the economies of our states makes it imperative for consistency and fairness to be central to the final legislation. It is also essential that reforms not be predicated on shifting costs to the states. Such short-term thinking will only compound problems for our country and the states. Instead, Congress should be focusing on providing states greater flexibility in developing their state Medicaid programs and encourage innovation instead of conformance to rigid federal standards; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize the President, the Congress, and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to provide that federal health care reforms, including the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R. 3590) and the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962), not impose increased costs on Michigan and other states, whether through expanded Medicaid requirements or other mandates; and be it further

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