

5. support primary care research, and address issues of access in underserved areas. While most policy discussions this year are targeting managed care, quality improvement is just as important to the solo private practitioner. The Agency's authority is expanded to support healthcare improvement in all types of office practice—not just managed care. The agency shall specifically address quality in rural and other underserved areas by advancing telemedicine services which share clinical expertise with more patients.

6. facilitate innovation in patient care with streamlined evaluation and assessment of new technologies. Patients should benefit from proven breakthrough technologies sooner, while inefficient methods should be phased out faster. Today, manufacturers and distributors of new technologies face major hurdles in trying to secure coverage. The Medicare technology committee has been particularly criticized for its process. Criteria are unclear, delays are long, and decisions are unpredictable. The Agency will be accessible to both private and public entities for technology assessments and will share information on assessment methodologies.

7. coordinate quality improvement efforts of the government. Most of the many federal healthcare programs today support some kind of health services research and conduct various quality improvement projects. The Agency shall coordinate these many initiatives to avoid disjointed, uncoordinated, or duplicative efforts.

In summary, we need to practice, not just publish, better patient care. We all want to see better quality.

Real improvement can come from progress in health sciences, from promoting innovation in patient care, and from better practical application of new scientific advances. The Agency for Healthcare Quality will focus on overall improvement in healthcare and enable us to judge the quality of care we receive.

Americans want better healthcare and the federal government shall respond by offering helpful information on quality, channeling scientific evidence to clinicians, and investing in research on improving health services.

Mr. President the "Healthcare Quality Enhancement Act of 1998" will reduce the gap between what we know and what we do in healthcare. The refocused Agency for Healthcare Quality is the right step forward and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to improve healthcare for all Americans.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 38

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. ABRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 38, a bill to reduce the number of executive branch political appointees.

S. 71

At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 71, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 496

At the request of Mr. CHAFEE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 496, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit against income tax to individuals who rehabilitate historic homes or who are the first purchasers of rehabilitated historic homes for use as a principal residence.

S. 505

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 505, a bill to amend the provisions of title 17, United States Code, with respect to the duration of copyright, and for other purposes.

S. 617

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY) were added as cosponsors of S. 617, a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to require that imported meat, and meat food products containing imported meat, bear a label identifying the country of origin.

S. 852

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 852, a bill to establish nationally uniform requirements regarding the titling and registration of salvage, non-repairable, and rebuilt vehicles.

S. 971

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 971, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to improve the quality of coastal recreation waters, and for other purposes.

S. 1413

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBAC) were added as cosponsors of S. 1413, a bill to provide a framework for consideration by the legislative and executive branches of unilateral economic sanctions.

S. 1647

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1647, a bill to reauthorize and make reforms to programs authorized by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965.

S. 1924

At the request of Mr. MACK, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH)

was added as a cosponsor of S. 1924, a bill to restore the standards used for determining whether technical workers are not employees as in effect before the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

S. 1929

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1929, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives to encourage production of oil and gas within the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1976

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1976, a bill to increase public awareness of the plight of victims of crime with developmental disabilities, to collect data to measure the magnitude of the problem, and to develop strategies to address the safety and justice needs of victims of crime with developmental disabilities.

S. 2017

At the request of Mr. D'AMATO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2017, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide medical assistance for breast and cervical cancer-related treatment services to certain women screened and found to have breast or cervical cancer under a Federally funded screening program.

S. 2022

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2022, a bill to provide for the improvement of interstate criminal justice identification, information, communications, and forensics.

S. 2027

At the request of Mr. BRYAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2027, a bill to clarify the fair tax treatment of meals provided hotel and restaurant employees in non-discriminatory employee cafeterias.

S. 2130

At the request of Mr. GRAMS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. FAIRCLOTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2130, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide additional retirement savings opportunities for small employers, including self-employed individuals.

S. 2150

At the request of Mr. FRIST, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2150, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the bone marrow donor program, and for other purposes.

S. 2151

At the request of Mr. NICKLES, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) were added as cosponsors of

S. 2151, a bill to clarify Federal law to prohibit the dispensing or distribution of a controlled substance for the purpose of causing, or assisting in causing, the suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing of any individual.

S. 2199

At the request of Mr. TORRICELLI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2199, a bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to establish a Marine Mammal Rescue Grant Program, and for other purposes.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 50

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of Senate Joint Resolution 50, a joint resolution to disapprove the rule submitted by the Health Care Financing Administration, Department of Health and Human Services on June 1, 1998, relating to surety bond requirements for home health agencies under the medicare and medicaid programs.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 88

At the request of Mr. D'AMATO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 88, a concurrent resolution calling on Japan to establish and maintain an open, competitive market for consumer photographic film and paper and other sectors facing market access barriers in Japan.

SENATE RESOLUTION 193

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. KEMPTHORNE), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 193, a resolution designating December 13, 1998, as "National Children's Memorial Day."

SENATE RESOLUTION 237

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 237, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the situation in Indonesia and East Timor.

AMENDMENT NO. 2405

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2405 proposed to S. 2057, an original bill to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. WARNER, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2405 proposed to S. 2057, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 2407

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2407 proposed to S. 2057, an original bill to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2407 proposed to S. 2057, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 2809

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2809 intended to be proposed to S. 2057, an original bill to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2832

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2832 intended to be proposed to S. 2057, an original bill to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2833

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2833 intended to be proposed to S. 2057, an original bill to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

SENATE RESOLUTION 253—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE RELATIVE TO TEXAS FARMERS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING DROUGHT CONDITIONS

Mr. GRAMM (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. RES. 253

Whereas, the statewide economic impact of the drought on Texas agriculture could be more than \$1.7 billion in losses, according to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service;

Whereas, the direct loss of income to agricultural producers is \$517 million, which will

lead to a loss of another \$1.2 billion in economic activity for the state;

Whereas, the National Weather Service has reported that all 10 climatic regions in the State of Texas have received below average rainfall from March through May, a critical time in the production of corn, cotton, sorghum, wheat, and forage;

Whereas, the total losses for Texas cotton producers have already reached an estimated \$157 million;

Whereas, nearly half of the State of Texas' rangelands as of May 31, 1998, was rated as "poor" or "very poor" as a result of the lack of rain;

Whereas, the value of lost hay production in the State of Texas will approach an estimated \$175 million statewide, leading to an economic impact of \$582 million;

Whereas, dryland fruit and vegetable production losses in East Texas have already been estimated at \$33 million;

Whereas, the early rains in many parts of Texas produced a large quantity of forage that is now extremely dry and a dangerous source of fuel for wildfires;

Whereas, the Texas Forest Service has indicated that over half the state is in extreme or high danger of wildfires due to the drought conditions.

Resolved, That it is the Sense of the Senate of the United States that the Secretary of Agriculture streamline the drought declaration process to provide necessary relief as quickly as possible; that the Secretary of Agriculture ensure that local Farm Service Agency offices are equipped with full time and emergency personnel in drought-stricken areas to assist producers with disaster loan application packages; that the Secretary of Agriculture instruct the United States Forest Service to assist the State of Texas and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in pre-positioning fire fighting equipment and other appropriate resources in affected Texas counties; that the Secretary of Agriculture authorize haying and grazing on Conservation Reserve Program acreage; that the Secretary of Agriculture convene experts within the Department to develop and implement an emergency plan to help prevent wildfires and to overcome the economic impact of the continuing drought so the Department of Agriculture can provide assistance in a rapid and efficient manner for producers who are suffering from drought conditions.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

LEAHY AMENDMENT NO. 2932

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill (S. 2057) to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. 232. LANDMINES.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—(1) Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated in