

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 98

By Niceley

A RESOLUTION to urge Congress and the United States Department of Health and Human Services to revise and update the Medicare Wage Index factor.

WHEREAS, Tennessee hospitals receive Medicare reimbursements based in part on the Medicare Wage Index; and

WHEREAS, the wage index was originally designed to reflect regionalized cost variations; and

WHEREAS, the Medicare Wage Index was originally determined by cost reports submitted by hospitals, along with a myriad of rules and adjustments; and

WHEREAS, the current wage index calculations have been subverted by legislation overriding the wage index and requiring an artificially established wage index for approximately 37 percent of all wage index calculations; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee hospitals have not received any legislative relief for wage index calculations; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee hospitals receive wage index reimbursements that are among the lowest in the country; and

WHEREAS, Medicare reimbursements for labor costs at Tennessee hospitals are not accurately reflected by the current wage index; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) have called for revisions in the wage index; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, that we hereby urge Congress and the United States Department of Health and Human Services to revise and update the Medicare Wage Index in a manner that more accurately reflects the labor costs in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Tennessee congressional delegation, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.