

HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND
QUALITY ACT OF 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 580) to amend title IX of the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the Agency for Healthcare Policy and Research, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) for an explanation of his unanimous consent request.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, S. 580 reauthorizes and renames the Agency for Healthcare Policy and Research as the agency for Health Research and Quality, AHRQ. It also refocuses the Agency's mission, which is to conduct and support research on the quality, outcomes, cost, and utilization of healthcare services, and access to those services.

The agency will promote quality by sharing information, build public-private partnerships to advance and share quality measures, report annually to Congress on the state of quality in the Nation, support the evaluation of state-of-the-art information systems for healthcare quality, support primary care and access in underserved areas, facilitate innovation in patient care with streamlined assessment of new technologies, coordinate quality improvement efforts to avoid duplication, and facilitate utilization of preventative health services.

The bill also authorizes appropriations for pediatric graduate medical education in children's hospitals. These represent important reforms.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this request.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, further reserving my right to object, with that explanation, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) to let my colleagues know that I support the adoption of S. 580.

I am particularly pleased because one of the key provisions in this bill is the Graduate Medical Education Funding for children's hospitals. They will receive actual dollars in fiscal year 2000 if this authorization is enacted. We have worked in a bipartisan manner in this bill, and I am glad to see its inclusion.

HCPR is needed to study key health care issues as we go into the next century. These issues include access, cost, quality, and equity in virtually all aspects of the health care system.

The true bipartisanship exhibited by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLI-

LEY), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), his staff, the Senate, particularly the efforts of Senators JEFFORDS, FRIST, KENNEDY, and their staff, especially the efforts of Ellie Dehoney in my office.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend that this bill be adopted by unanimous consent in the House of Representatives.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support consideration of S. 580, the Healthcare Research and Quality Act of 1999 by the House today. I introduced H.R. 2506 in the House on September 14, 1999. Following approval by my Subcommittee and the full Commerce Committee, the House voted overwhelmingly to pass H.R. 2506 on September 28, 1999.

Late last week, the Senate passed S. 580 by unanimous consent. The bill before us today represents a bipartisan agreement between the House and Senate authorizing committees on a compromise version of the bills previously approved by each body. This widely supported, bipartisan measure is critical to improving the quality of health care in this country. The "Healthcare Research and Quality Act of 1999" will significantly increase health care research and science-based evidence to improve the quality of patient care.

S. 580 reauthorizes the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) for fiscal years 2000–2005, renames it as the "Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality," and refocuses the agency's mission to become a focal point, and partner to the private sector, in supporting of health care research and quality improvement activities.

Equally important, the bill authorizes critical funding for our nation's children's hospitals. I was pleased to support the adoption of these provisions when this bill was previously considered by the House. Passage of this legislation today is an important step in ensuring that America's children's hospitals receive the resources that they need.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 580

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Healthcare Research and Quality Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 299 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

"TITLE IX—AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY

"PART A—ESTABLISHMENT AND GENERAL DUTIES

"SEC. 901. MISSION AND DUTIES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the Public Health Service an agency to be known as the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which shall be headed by a director appointed by the Secretary.

The Secretary shall carry out this title acting through the Director.

"(b) MISSION.—The purpose of the Agency is to enhance the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of health services, and access to such services, through the establishment of a broad base of scientific research and through the promotion of improvements in clinical and health system practices, including the prevention of diseases and other health conditions. The Agency shall promote health care quality improvement by conducting and supporting—

"(1) research that develops and presents scientific evidence regarding all aspects of health care, including—

"(A) the development and assessment of methods for enhancing patient participation in their own care and for facilitating shared patient-physician decision-making;

"(B) the outcomes, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of health care practices, including preventive measures and long-term care;

"(C) existing and innovative technologies;

"(D) the costs and utilization of, and access to health care;

"(E) the ways in which health care services are organized, delivered, and financed and the interaction and impact of these factors on the quality of patient care;

"(F) methods for measuring quality and strategies for improving quality; and

"(G) ways in which patients, consumers, purchasers, and practitioners acquire new information about best practices and health benefits, the determinants and impact of their use of this information;

"(2) the synthesis and dissemination of available scientific evidence for use by patients, consumers, practitioners, providers, purchasers, policy makers, and educators; and

"(3) initiatives to advance private and public efforts to improve health care quality.

"(c) REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO RURAL AND INNER-CITY AREAS AND PRIORITY POPULATIONS.—

"(1) RESEARCH, EVALUATIONS AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—In carrying out this title, the Director shall conduct and support research and evaluations, and support demonstration projects, with respect to—

"(A) the delivery of health care in inner-city areas, and in rural areas (including frontier areas); and

"(B) health care for priority populations, which shall include—

"(i) low-income groups;

"(ii) minority groups;

"(iii) women;

"(iv) children;

"(v) the elderly; and

"(vi) individuals with special health care needs, including individuals with disabilities and individuals who need chronic care or end-of-life health care.

"(2) PROCESS TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE RESEARCH.—The Director shall establish a process to ensure that the requirements of paragraph (1) are reflected in the overall portfolio of research conducted and supported by the Agency.

"(3) OFFICE OF PRIORITY POPULATIONS.—The Director shall establish an Office of Priority Populations to assist in carrying out the requirements of paragraph (1).

"SEC. 902. GENERAL AUTHORITIES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out section 901(b), the Director shall conduct and support research, evaluations, and training, support demonstration projects, research networks, and multi-disciplinary centers, provide technical assistance, and disseminate information on health care and on systems

for the delivery of such care, including activities with respect to—

“(1) the quality, effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and value of health care services;

“(2) quality measurement and improvement;

“(3) the outcomes, cost, cost-effectiveness, and use of health care services and access to such services;

“(4) clinical practice, including primary care and practice-oriented research;

“(5) health care technologies, facilities, and equipment;

“(6) health care costs, productivity, organization, and market forces;

“(7) health promotion and disease prevention, including clinical preventive services;

“(8) health statistics, surveys, database development, and epidemiology; and

“(9) medical liability.

“(b) HEALTH SERVICES TRAINING GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may provide training grants in the field of health services research related to activities authorized under subsection (a), to include pre- and post-doctoral fellowships and training programs, young investigator awards, and other programs and activities as appropriate. In carrying out this subsection, the Director shall make use of funds made available under section 487(d)(3) as well as other appropriated funds.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing priorities for the allocation of training funds under this subsection, the Director shall take into consideration shortages in the number of trained researchers who are addressing health care issues for the priority populations identified in section 901(c)(1)(B) and in addition, shall take into consideration indications of long-term commitment, amongst applicants for training funds, to addressing health care needs of the priority populations.

“(c) MULTIDISCIPLINARY CENTERS.—The Director may provide financial assistance to assist in meeting the costs of planning and establishing new centers, and operating existing and new centers, for multidisciplinary health services research, demonstration projects, evaluations, training, and policy analysis with respect to the matters referred to in subsection (a).

“(d) RELATION TO CERTAIN AUTHORITIES REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY.—Activities authorized in this section shall be appropriately coordinated with experiments, demonstration projects, and other related activities authorized by the Social Security Act and the Social Security Amendments of 1967. Activities under subsection (a)(2) of this section that affect the programs under titles XVIII, XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act shall be carried out consistent with section 1142 of such Act.

“(e) DISCLAIMER.—The Agency shall not mandate national standards of clinical practice or quality health care standards. Recommendations resulting from projects funded and published by the Agency shall include a corresponding disclaimer.

“(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to imply that the Agency's role is to mandate a national standard or specific approach to quality measurement and reporting. In research and quality improvement activities, the Agency shall consider a wide range of choices, providers, health care delivery systems, and individual preferences.

“(g) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning with fiscal year 2003, the Director shall annually submit to the Congress a report regarding

prevailing disparities in health care delivery as it relates to racial factors and socioeconomic factors in priority populations.

“PART B—HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH

“SEC. 911. HEALTH CARE OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH.

“(a) EVIDENCE RATING SYSTEMS.—In collaboration with experts from the public and private sector, the Agency shall identify and disseminate methods or systems to assess health care research results, particularly methods or systems to rate the strength of the scientific evidence underlying health care practice, recommendations in the research literature, and technology assessments. The Agency shall make methods or systems for evidence rating widely available. Agency publications containing health care recommendations shall indicate the level of substantiating evidence using such methods or systems.

“(b) HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH CENTERS AND PROVIDER-BASED RESEARCH NETWORKS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to address the full continuum of care and outcomes research, to link research to practice improvement, and to speed the dissemination of research findings to community practice settings, the Agency shall employ research strategies and mechanisms that will link research directly with clinical practice in geographically diverse locations throughout the United States, including—

“(A) health care improvement research centers that combine demonstrated multidisciplinary expertise in outcomes or quality improvement research with linkages to relevant sites of care;

“(B) provider-based research networks, including plan, facility, or delivery system sites of care (especially primary care), that can evaluate outcomes and evaluate and promote quality improvement; and

“(C) other innovative mechanisms or strategies to link research with clinical practice.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The Director is authorized to establish the requirements for entities applying for grants under this subsection.

“SEC. 912. PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATION AND DELIVERY.

“(a) SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO DEVELOP INFORMATION ON QUALITY.—

“(1) SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.—In its role as the principal agency for health care research and quality, the Agency may provide scientific and technical support for private and public efforts to improve health care quality, including the activities of accrediting organizations.

“(2) ROLE OF THE AGENCY.—With respect to paragraph (1), the role of the Agency shall include—

“(A) the identification and assessment of methods for the evaluation of the health of—

“(i) enrollees in health plans by type of plan, provider, and provider arrangements; and

“(ii) other populations, including those receiving long-term care services;

“(B) the ongoing development, testing, and dissemination of quality measures, including measures of health and functional outcomes;

“(C) the compilation and dissemination of health care quality measures developed in the private and public sector;

“(D) assistance in the development of improved health care information systems;

“(E) the development of survey tools for the purpose of measuring participant and beneficiary assessments of their health care; and

“(F) identifying and disseminating information on mechanisms for the integration of information on quality into purchaser and consumer decision-making processes.

“(b) CENTERS FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH ON THERAPEUTICS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director and in consultation with the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, shall establish a program for the purpose of making one or more grants for the establishment and operation of one or more centers to carry out the activities specified in paragraph (2).

“(2) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—The activities referred to in this paragraph are the following:

“(A) The conduct of state-of-the-art research for the following purposes:

“(i) To increase awareness of—

“(I) new uses of drugs, biological products, and devices;

“(II) ways to improve the effective use of drugs, biological products, and devices; and

“(III) risks of new uses and risks of combinations of drugs and biological products.

“(ii) To provide objective clinical information to the following individuals and entities:

“(I) Health care practitioners and other providers of health care goods or services.

“(II) Pharmacists, pharmacy benefit managers and purchasers.

“(III) Health maintenance organizations and other managed health care organizations.

“(IV) Health care insurers and governmental agencies.

“(V) Patients and consumers.

“(iii) To improve the quality of health care while reducing the cost of health care through—

“(I) an increase in the appropriate use of drugs, biological products, or devices; and

“(II) the prevention of adverse effects of drugs, biological products, and devices and the consequences of such effects, such as unnecessary hospitalizations.

“(B) The conduct of research on the comparative effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and safety of drugs, biological products, and devices.

“(C) Such other activities as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, except that a grant may not be expended to assist the Secretary in the review of new drugs, biological products, and devices.

“(c) REDUCING ERRORS IN MEDICINE.—The Director shall conduct and support research and build private-public partnerships to—

“(1) identify the causes of preventable health care errors and patient injury in health care delivery;

“(2) develop, demonstrate, and evaluate strategies for reducing errors and improving patient safety; and

“(3) disseminate such effective strategies throughout the health care industry.

“SEC. 913. INFORMATION ON QUALITY AND COST OF CARE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall—

“(1) conduct a survey to collect data on a nationally representative sample of the population on the cost, use and, for fiscal year 2001 and subsequent fiscal years, quality of health care, including the types of health care services Americans use, their access to health care services, frequency of use, how much is paid for the services used, the source of those payments, the types and costs of private health insurance, access, satisfaction, and quality of care for the general population including rural residents and also for populations identified in section 901(c); and

“(2) develop databases and tools that provide information to States on the quality, access, and use of health care services provided to their residents.

“(b) **QUALITY AND OUTCOMES INFORMATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning in fiscal year 2001, the Director shall ensure that the survey conducted under subsection (a)(1) will—

“(A) identify determinants of health outcomes and functional status, including the health care needs of populations identified in section 901(c), provide data to study the relationships between health care quality, outcomes, access, use, and cost, measure changes over time, and monitor the overall national impact of Federal and State policy changes on health care;

“(B) provide information on the quality of care and patient outcomes for frequently occurring clinical conditions for a nationally representative sample of the population including rural residents; and

“(C) provide reliable national estimates for children and persons with special health care needs through the use of supplements or periodic expansions of the survey.

In expanding the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, as in existence on the date of the enactment of this title in fiscal year 2001 to collect information on the quality of care, the Director shall take into account any outcomes measurements generally collected by private sector accreditation organizations.

“(2) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Beginning in fiscal year 2003, the Secretary, acting through the Director, shall submit to Congress an annual report on national trends in the quality of health care provided to the American people.

“**SEC. 914. INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT.**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In order to foster a range of innovative approaches to the management and communication of health information, the Agency shall conduct and support research, evaluations, and initiatives to advance—

“(1) the use of information systems for the study of health care quality and outcomes, including the generation of both individual provider and plan-level comparative performance data;

“(2) training for health care practitioners and researchers in the use of information systems;

“(3) the creation of effective linkages between various sources of health information, including the development of information networks;

“(4) the delivery and coordination of evidence-based health care services, including the use of real-time health care decision-support programs;

“(5) the utility and comparability of health information data and medical vocabularies by addressing issues related to the content, structure, definitions and coding of such information and data in consultation with appropriate Federal, State and private entities;

“(6) the use of computer-based health records in all settings for the development of personal health records for individual health assessment and maintenance, and for monitoring public health and outcomes of care within populations; and

“(7) the protection of individually identifiable information in health services research and health care quality improvement.

“(b) **DEMONSTRATION.**—The Agency shall support demonstrations into the use of new information tools aimed at improving shared decision-making between patients and their care-givers.

“(c) **FACILITATING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**—The Director shall work with ap-

propriate public and private sector entities to facilitate public access to information regarding the quality of and consumer satisfaction with health care.

“**SEC. 915. RESEARCH SUPPORTING PRIMARY CARE AND ACCESS IN UNDERSERVED AREAS.**

“(a) **PREVENTIVE SERVICES TASK FORCE.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.**—The Director may periodically convene a Preventive Services Task Force to be composed of individuals with appropriate expertise. Such a task force shall review the scientific evidence related to the effectiveness, appropriateness, and cost-effectiveness of clinical preventive services for the purpose of developing recommendations for the health care community, and updating previous clinical preventive recommendations.

“(2) **ROLE OF AGENCY.**—The Agency shall provide ongoing administrative, research, and technical support for the operations of the Preventive Services Task Force, including coordinating and supporting the dissemination of the recommendations of the Task Force.

“(3) **OPERATION.**—In carrying out its responsibilities under paragraph (1), the Task Force is not subject to the provisions of Appendix 2 of title 5, United States Code.

“(b) **PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established within the Agency a Center for Primary Care Research (referred to in this subsection as the “Center”) that shall serve as the principal source of funding for primary care practice research in the Department of Health and Human Services. For purposes of this paragraph, primary care research focuses on the first contact when illness or health concerns arise, the diagnosis, treatment or referral to specialty care, preventive care, and the relationship between the clinician and the patient in the context of the family and community.

“(2) **RESEARCH.**—In carrying out this section, the Center shall conduct and support research concerning—

“(A) the nature and characteristics of primary care practice;

“(B) the management of commonly occurring clinical problems;

“(C) the management of undifferentiated clinical problems; and

“(D) the continuity and coordination of health services.

“**SEC. 916. HEALTH CARE PRACTICE AND TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION.**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall promote innovation in evidence-based health care practices and technologies by—

“(1) conducting and supporting research on the development, diffusion, and use of health care technology;

“(2) developing, evaluating, and disseminating methodologies for assessments of health care practices and technologies;

“(3) conducting intramural and supporting extramural assessments of existing and new health care practices and technologies;

“(4) promoting education and training and providing technical assistance in the use of health care practice and technology assessment methodologies and results; and

“(5) working with the National Library of Medicine and the public and private sector to develop an electronic clearinghouse of currently available assessments and those in progress.

“(b) **SPECIFICATION OF PROCESS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than December 31, 2000, the Director shall develop and publish a description of the methods used by the Agency and its contractors for health care practice and technology assessment.

“(2) **CONSULTATIONS.**—In carrying out this subsection, the Director shall cooperate and consult with the Assistant Secretary for Health, the Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, and the heads of any other interested Federal department or agency, and shall seek input, where appropriate, from professional societies and other private and public entities.

“(3) **METHODOLOGY.**—The Director shall, in developing the methods used under paragraph (1), consider—

“(A) safety, efficacy, and effectiveness;

“(B) legal, social, and ethical implications;

“(C) costs, benefits, and cost-effectiveness;

“(D) comparisons to alternate health care practices and technologies; and

“(E) requirements of Food and Drug Administration approval to avoid duplication.

“(c) **SPECIFIC ASSESSMENTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall conduct or support specific assessments of health care technologies and practices.

“(2) **REQUESTS FOR ASSESSMENTS.**—The Director is authorized to conduct or support assessments, on a reimbursable basis, for the Health Care Financing Administration, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Office of Personnel Management, and other public or private entities.

“(3) **GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.**—In addition to conducting assessments, the Director may make grants to, or enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with, entities described in paragraph (4) for the purpose of conducting assessments of experimental, emerging, existing, or potentially outmoded health care technologies, and for related activities.

“(4) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—An entity described in this paragraph is an entity that is determined to be appropriate by the Director, including academic medical centers, research institutions and organizations, professional organizations, third party payers, governmental agencies, minority institutions of higher education (such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic institutions), and consortia of appropriate research entities established for the purpose of conducting technology assessments.

“(d) **MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN VICTIMS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall develop and disseminate a report on evidence-based clinical practices for—

“(A) the examination and treatment by health professionals of individuals who are victims of sexual assault (including child molestation) or attempted sexual assault; and

“(B) the training of health professionals, in consultation with the Health Resources and Services Administration, on performing medical evidentiary examinations of individuals who are victims of child abuse or neglect, sexual assault, elder abuse, or domestic violence.

“(2) **CERTAIN CONSIDERATIONS.**—In identifying the issues to be addressed by the report, the Director shall, to the extent practicable, take into consideration the expertise and experience of Federal and State law enforcement officials regarding the victims referred to in paragraph (1), and of other appropriate public and private entities (including medical societies, victim services organizations, sexual assault prevention organizations, and social services organizations).

“SEC. 917. COORDINATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS.**“(a) REQUIREMENT.—**

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To avoid duplication and ensure that Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively, the Secretary, acting through the Director, shall coordinate all research, evaluations, and demonstrations related to health services research, quality measurement and quality improvement activities undertaken and supported by the Federal Government.

“(2) SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES.—The Director, in collaboration with the appropriate Federal officials representing all concerned executive agencies and departments, shall develop and manage a process to—

“(A) improve interagency coordination, priority setting, and the use and sharing of research findings and data pertaining to Federal quality improvement programs, technology assessment, and health services research;

“(B) strengthen the research information infrastructure, including databases, pertaining to Federal health services research and health care quality improvement initiatives;

“(C) set specific goals for participating agencies and departments to further health services research and health care quality improvement; and

“(D) strengthen the management of Federal health care quality improvement programs.

“(b) STUDY BY THE INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To provide Congress, the Department of Health and Human Services, and other relevant departments with an independent, external review of their quality oversight, quality improvement and quality research programs, the Secretary shall enter into a contract with the Institute of Medicine—

“(A) to describe and evaluate current quality improvement, quality research and quality monitoring processes through—

“(i) an overview of pertinent health services research activities and quality improvement efforts conducted by all Federal programs, with particular attention paid to those under titles XVIII, XIX, and XXI of the Social Security Act; and

“(ii) a summary of the partnerships that the Department of Health and Human Services has pursued with private accreditation, quality measurement and improvement organizations; and

“(B) to identify options and make recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of quality improvement programs through—

“(i) the improved coordination of activities across the medicare, medicaid and child health insurance programs under titles XVIII, XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act and health services research programs;

“(ii) the strengthening of patient choice and participation by incorporating state-of-the-art quality monitoring tools and making information on quality available; and

“(iii) the enhancement of the most effective programs, consolidation as appropriate, and elimination of duplicative activities within various federal agencies.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into a contract with the Institute of Medicine for the preparation—

“(i) not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this title, of a report providing an overview of the quality improvement programs of the Department of

Health and Human Services for the medicare, medicaid, and CHIP programs under titles XVIII, XIX, and XXI of the Social Security Act; and

“(ii) not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this title, of a final report containing recommendations.

“(B) REPORTS.—The Secretary shall submit the reports described in subparagraph (A) to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Commerce of the House of Representatives.

“PART C—GENERAL PROVISIONS**“SEC. 921. ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY.**

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an advisory council to be known as the National Advisory Council for Healthcare Research and Quality.

“(b) DUTIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Council shall advise the Secretary and the Director with respect to activities proposed or undertaken to carry out the mission of the Agency under section 901(b).

“(2) CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS.—Activities of the Advisory Council under paragraph (1) shall include making recommendations to the Director regarding—

“(A) priorities regarding health care research, especially studies related to quality, outcomes, cost and the utilization of, and access to, health care services;

“(B) the field of health care research and related disciplines, especially issues related to training needs, and dissemination of information pertaining to health care quality; and

“(C) the appropriate role of the Agency in each of these areas in light of private sector activity and identification of opportunities for public-private sector partnerships.

“(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Council shall, in accordance with this subsection, be composed of appointed members and ex officio members. All members of the Advisory Council shall be voting members other than the individuals designated under paragraph (3)(B) as ex officio members.

“(2) APPOINTED MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint to the Advisory Council 21 appropriately qualified individuals. At least 17 members of the Advisory Council shall be representatives of the public who are not officers or employees of the United States and at least 1 member who shall be a specialist in the rural aspects of 1 or more of the professions or fields described in subparagraphs (A) through (G). The Secretary shall ensure that the appointed members of the Council, as a group, are representative of professions and entities concerned with, or affected by, activities under this title and under section 1142 of the Social Security Act. Of such members—

“(A) three shall be individuals distinguished in the conduct of research, demonstration projects, and evaluations with respect to health care;

“(B) three shall be individuals distinguished in the fields of health care quality research or health care improvement;

“(C) three shall be individuals distinguished in the practice of medicine of which at least one shall be a primary care practitioner;

“(D) three shall be individuals distinguished in the other health professions;

“(E) three shall be individuals either representing the private health care sector, including health plans, providers, and pur-

chasers or individuals distinguished as administrators of health care delivery systems;

“(F) three shall be individuals distinguished in the fields of health care economics, information systems, law, ethics, business, or public policy; and

“(G) three shall be individuals representing the interests of patients and consumers of health care.

“(3) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall designate as ex officio members of the Advisory Council—

“(A) the Assistant Secretary for Health, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration, the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), and the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

“(B) such other Federal officials as the Secretary may consider appropriate.

“(d) TERMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Members of the Advisory Council appointed under subsection (c)(2) shall serve for a term of 3 years.

“(2) STAGGERED TERMS.—To ensure the staggered rotation of one-third of the members of the Advisory Council each year, the Secretary is authorized to appoint the initial members of the Advisory Council for terms of 1, 2, or 3 years.

“(3) SERVICE BEYOND TERM.—A member of the Council appointed under subsection (c)(2) may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of the members until a successor is appointed.

“(e) VACANCIES.—If a member of the Advisory Council appointed under subsection (c)(2) does not serve the full term applicable under subsection (d), the individual appointed to fill the resulting vacancy shall be appointed for the remainder of the term of the predecessor of the individual.

“(f) CHAIR.—The Director shall, from among the members of the Advisory Council appointed under subsection (c)(2), designate an individual to serve as the chair of the Advisory Council.

“(g) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Council shall meet not less than once during each discrete 4-month period and shall otherwise meet at the call of the Director or the chair.

“(h) COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—

“(1) APPOINTED MEMBERS.—Members of the Advisory Council appointed under subsection (c)(2) shall receive compensation for each day (including travel time) engaged in carrying out the duties of the Advisory Council unless declined by the member. Such compensation may not be in an amount in excess of the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Advisory Council.

“(2) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—Officials designated under subsection (c)(3) as ex officio members of the Advisory Council may not receive compensation for service on the Advisory Council in addition to the compensation otherwise received for duties carried out as officers of the United States.

“(i) STAFF.—The Director shall provide to the Advisory Council such staff, information, and other assistance as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the Council.

“(j) DURATION.—Notwithstanding section 14(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act,

the Advisory Council shall continue in existence until otherwise provided by law.

“SEC. 922. PEER REVIEW WITH RESPECT TO GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.

“(a) REQUIREMENT OF REVIEW.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Appropriate technical and scientific peer review shall be conducted with respect to each application for a grant, cooperative agreement, or contract under this title.

“(2) REPORTS TO DIRECTOR.—Each peer review group to which an application is submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall report its finding and recommendations respecting the application to the Director in such form and in such manner as the Director shall require.

“(b) APPROVAL AS PRECONDITION OF AWARDS.—The Director may not approve an application described in subsection (a)(1) unless the application is recommended for approval by a peer review group established under subsection (c).

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF PEER REVIEW GROUPS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish such technical and scientific peer review groups as may be necessary to carry out this section. Such groups shall be established without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, that govern appointments in the competitive service, and without regard to the provisions of chapter 51, and subchapter III of chapter 53, of such title that relate to classification and pay rates under the General Schedule.

“(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of any peer review group established under this section shall be appointed from among individuals who by virtue of their training or experience are eminently qualified to carry out the duties of such peer review group. Officers and employees of the United States may not constitute more than 25 percent of the membership of any such group. Such officers and employees may not receive compensation for service on such groups in addition to the compensation otherwise received for these duties carried out as such officers and employees.

“(3) DURATION.—Notwithstanding section 14(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, peer review groups established under this section may continue in existence until otherwise provided by law.

“(4) QUALIFICATIONS.—Members of any peer-review group shall, at a minimum, meet the following requirements:

“(A) Such members shall agree in writing to treat information received, pursuant to their work for the group, as confidential information, except that this subparagraph shall not apply to public records and public information.

“(B) Such members shall agree in writing to recuse themselves from participation in the peer-review of specific applications which present a potential personal conflict of interest or appearance of such conflict, including employment in a directly affected organization, stock ownership, or any financial or other arrangement that might introduce bias in the process of peer-review.

“(d) AUTHORITY FOR PROCEDURAL ADJUSTMENTS IN CERTAIN CASES.—In the case of applications for financial assistance whose direct costs will not exceed \$100,000, the Director may make appropriate adjustments in the procedures otherwise established by the Director for the conduct of peer review under this section. Such adjustments may be made for the purpose of encouraging the entry of individuals into the field of research, for the purpose of encouraging clinical practice-ori-

ented or provider-based research, and for such other purposes as the Director may determine to be appropriate.

“(e) REGULATIONS.—The Director shall issue regulations for the conduct of peer review under this section.

“SEC. 923. CERTAIN PROVISIONS WITH RESPECT TO DEVELOPMENT, COLLECTION, AND DISSEMINATION OF DATA.

“(a) STANDARDS WITH RESPECT TO UTILITY OF DATA.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To ensure the utility, accuracy, and sufficiency of data collected by or for the Agency for the purpose described in section 901(b), the Director shall establish standard methods for developing and collecting such data, taking into consideration—

“(A) other Federal health data collection standards; and

“(B) the differences between types of health care plans, delivery systems, health care providers, and provider arrangements.

“(2) RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS.—In any case where standards under paragraph (1) may affect the administration of other programs carried out by the Department of Health and Human Services, including the programs under title XVIII, XIX or XXI of the Social Security Act, or may affect health information that is subject to a standard developed under part C of title XI of the Social Security Act, they shall be in the form of recommendations to the Secretary for such program.

“(b) STATISTICS AND ANALYSES.—The Director shall—

“(1) take appropriate action to ensure that statistics and analyses developed under this title are of high quality, timely, and duly comprehensive, and that the statistics are specific, standardized, and adequately analyzed and indexed; and

“(2) publish, make available, and disseminate such statistics and analyses on as wide a basis as is practicable.

“(c) AUTHORITY REGARDING CERTAIN REQUESTS.—Upon request of a public or private entity, the Director may conduct or support research or analyses otherwise authorized by this title pursuant to arrangements under which such entity will pay the cost of the services provided. Amounts received by the Director under such arrangements shall be available to the Director for obligation until expended.

“SEC. 924. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall—

“(1) without regard to section 501 of title 44, United States Code, promptly publish, make available, and otherwise disseminate, in a form understandable and on as broad a basis as practicable so as to maximize its use, the results of research, demonstration projects, and evaluations conducted or supported under this title;

“(2) ensure that information disseminated by the Agency is science-based and objective and undertakes consultation as necessary to assess the appropriateness and usefulness of the presentation of information that is targeted to specific audiences;

“(3) promptly make available to the public data developed in such research, demonstration projects, and evaluations;

“(4) provide, in collaboration with the National Library of Medicine where appropriate, indexing, abstracting, translating, publishing, and other services leading to a more effective and timely dissemination of information on research, demonstration projects, and evaluations with respect to health care to public and private entities and individuals engaged in the improvement of

health care delivery and the general public, and undertake programs to develop new or improved methods for making such information available; and

“(5) as appropriate, provide technical assistance to State and local government and health agencies and conduct liaison activities to such agencies to foster dissemination.

“(b) PROHIBITION AGAINST RESTRICTIONS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the Director may not restrict the publication or dissemination of data from, or the results of, projects conducted or supported under this title.

“(c) LIMITATION ON USE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—No information, if an establishment or person supplying the information or described in it is identifiable, obtained in the course of activities undertaken or supported under this title may be used for any purpose other than the purpose for which it was supplied unless such establishment or person has consented (as determined under regulations of the Director) to its use for such other purpose. Such information may not be published or released in other form if the person who supplied the information or who is described in it is identifiable unless such person has consented (as determined under regulations of the Director) to its publication or release in other form.

“(d) PENALTY.—Any person who violates subsection (c) shall be subject to a civil monetary penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each such violation involved. Such penalty shall be imposed and collected in the same manner as civil money penalties under subsection (a) of section 1128A of the Social Security Act are imposed and collected.

“SEC. 925. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS WITH RESPECT TO GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.

“(a) FINANCIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—With respect to projects for which awards of grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts are authorized to be made under this title, the Director shall by regulation define—

“(1) the specific circumstances that constitute financial interests in such projects that will, or may be reasonably expected to, create a bias in favor of obtaining results in the projects that are consistent with such interests; and

“(2) the actions that will be taken by the Director in response to any such interests identified by the Director.

“(b) REQUIREMENT OF APPLICATION.—The Director may not, with respect to any program under this title authorizing the provision of grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts, provide any such financial assistance unless an application for the assistance is submitted to the Secretary and the application is in such form, is made in such manner, and contains such agreements, assurances, and information as the Director determines to be necessary to carry out the program involved.

“(c) PROVISION OF SUPPLIES AND SERVICES IN LIEU OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of an entity receiving a grant, cooperative agreement, or contract under this title, the Secretary may, subject to paragraph (2), provide supplies, equipment, and services for the purpose of aiding the entity in carrying out the project involved and, for such purpose, may detail to the entity any officer or employee of the Department of Health and Human Services.

“(2) CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN FUNDS.—With respect to a request described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall reduce the amount of the financial assistance involved by an amount equal to the costs of detailing

personnel and the fair market value of any supplies, equipment, or services provided by the Director. The Secretary shall, for the payment of expenses incurred in complying with such request, expend the amounts withheld.

“(d) **APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS WITH RESPECT TO CONTRACTS.**—Contracts may be entered into under this part without regard to sections 3648 and 3709 of the Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 529 and 41 U.S.C. 5).
“SEC. 926. CERTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES.

“(a) **DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND OTHER OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.**—

“(1) **DEPUTY DIRECTOR.**—The Director may appoint a deputy director for the Agency.

“(2) **OTHER OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.**—The Director may appoint and fix the compensation of such officers and employees as may be necessary to carry out this title. Except as otherwise provided by law, such officers and employees shall be appointed in accordance with the civil service laws and their compensation fixed in accordance with title 5, United States Code.

“(b) **FACILITIES.**—The Secretary, in carrying out this title—

“(1) may acquire, without regard to the Act of March 3, 1877 (40 U.S.C. 34), by lease or otherwise through the Administrator of General Services, buildings or portions of buildings in the District of Columbia or communities located adjacent to the District of Columbia for use for a period not to exceed 10 years; and

“(2) may acquire, construct, improve, repair, operate, and maintain laboratory, research, and other necessary facilities and equipment, and such other real or personal property (including patents) as the Secretary deems necessary.

“(c) **PROVISION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Director, in carrying out this title, may make grants to public and nonprofit entities and individuals, and may enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with public and private entities and individuals.

“(d) **UTILIZATION OF CERTAIN PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES.**—

“(1) **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.**—The Director, in carrying out this title, may utilize personnel and equipment, facilities, and other physical resources of the Department of Health and Human Services, permit appropriate (as determined by the Secretary) entities and individuals to utilize the physical resources of such Department, and provide technical assistance and advice.

“(2) **OTHER AGENCIES.**—The Director, in carrying out this title, may use, with their consent, the services, equipment, personnel, information, and facilities of other Federal, State, or local public agencies, or of any foreign government, with or without reimbursement of such agencies.

“(e) **CONSULTANTS.**—The Secretary, in carrying out this title, may secure, from time to time and for such periods as the Director deems advisable but in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, the assistance and advice of consultants from the United States or abroad.

“(f) **EXPERTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may, in carrying out this title, obtain the services of not more than 50 experts or consultants who have appropriate scientific or professional qualifications. Such experts or consultants shall be obtained in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, except that the limitation in such section on the duration of service shall not apply.

“(2) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Experts and consultants whose services are obtained under paragraph (1) shall be paid or reimbursed for their expenses associated with traveling to and from their assignment location in accordance with sections 5724, 5724a(a), 5724a(c), and 5726(c) of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) **LIMITATION.**—Expenses specified in subparagraph (A) may not be allowed in connection with the assignment of an expert or consultant whose services are obtained under paragraph (1) unless and until the expert agrees in writing to complete the entire period of assignment, or 1 year, whichever is shorter, unless separated or reassigned for reasons that are beyond the control of the expert or consultant and that are acceptable to the Secretary. If the expert or consultant violates the agreement, the money spent by the United States for the expenses specified in subparagraph (A) is recoverable from the expert or consultant as a statutory obligation owed to the United States. The Secretary may waive in whole or in part a right of recovery under this subparagraph.

“(g) **VOLUNTARY AND UNCOMPENSATED SERVICES.**—The Director, in carrying out this title, may accept voluntary and uncompensated services.

“**SEC. 927. FUNDING.**

“(a) **INTENT.**—To ensure that the United States investment in biomedical research is rapidly translated into improvements in the quality of patient care, there must be a corresponding investment in research on the most effective clinical and organizational strategies for use of these findings in daily practice. The authorization levels in subsections (b) and (c) provide for a proportionate increase in health care research as the United States investment in biomedical research increases.

“(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—For the purpose of carrying out this title, there are authorized to be appropriated \$250,000,000 for fiscal year 2000, and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

“(c) **EVALUATIONS.**—In addition to amounts available pursuant to subsection (b) for carrying out this title, there shall be made available for such purpose, from the amounts made available pursuant to section 241 (relating to evaluations), an amount equal to 40 percent of the maximum amount authorized in such section 241 to be made available for a fiscal year.

“**SEC. 928. DEFINITIONS.**

“In this title:

“(1) **ADVISORY COUNCIL.**—The term ‘Advisory Council’ means the National Advisory Council on Healthcare Research and Quality established under section 921.

“(2) **AGENCY.**—The term ‘Agency’ means the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

“(3) **DIRECTOR.**—The term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.”

(b) **RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 901(a) of the Public Health Service Act (as added by subsection (a) of this section) applies as a redesignation of the agency that carried out title IX of such Act on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, and not as the termination of such agency and the establishment of a different agency. The amendment made by subsection (a) of this section does not affect appointments of the personnel of such agency who were employed at the agency on the day before such date, including the appointments of members of advisory councils or study sections of the agen-

cy who were serving on the day before such date of enactment.

(2) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in law to the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research is deemed to be a reference to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and any reference in law to the Administrator for Health Care Policy and Research is deemed to be a reference to the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

SEC. 3. GRANTS REGARDING UTILIZATION OF PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.

Subpart I of part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following section:

“**SEC. 330D. CENTERS FOR STRATEGIES ON FACILITATING UTILIZATION OF PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES AMONG VARIOUS POPULATIONS.**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, acting through the appropriate agencies of the Public Health Service, shall make grants to public or nonprofit private entities for the establishment and operation of regional centers whose purpose is to develop, evaluate, and disseminate effective strategies, which utilize quality management measures, to assist public and private health care programs and providers in the appropriate utilization of preventive health care services by specific populations.

“(b) **RESEARCH AND TRAINING.**—The activities carried out by a center under subsection (a) may include establishing programs of research and training with respect to the purpose described in such subsection, including the development of curricula for training individuals in implementing the strategies developed under such subsection.

“(c) **PRIORITY REGARDING INFANTS AND CHILDREN.**—In carrying out the purpose described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to various populations of infants, young children, and their mothers.

“(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.”

SEC. 4. PROGRAM OF PAYMENTS TO CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS THAT OPERATE GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

Part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following subpart:

“Subpart IX—Support of Graduate Medical Education Programs in Children's Hospitals

“**SEC. 340E. PROGRAM OF PAYMENTS TO CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS THAT OPERATE GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.**

“(a) **PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall make two payments under this section to each children's hospital for each of fiscal years 2000 and 2001, one for the direct expenses and the other for indirect expenses associated with operating approved graduate medical residency training programs.

“(b) **AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraph (2), the amounts payable under this section to a children's hospital for an approved graduate medical residency training program for a fiscal year are each of the following amounts:

“(A) **DIRECT EXPENSE AMOUNT.**—The amount determined under subsection (c) for direct expenses associated with operating approved graduate medical residency training programs.

“(B) **INDIRECT EXPENSE AMOUNT.**—The amount determined under subsection (d) for

indirect expenses associated with the treatment of more severely ill patients and the additional costs relating to teaching residents in such programs.

“(2) CAPPED AMOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The total of the payments made to children’s hospitals under paragraph (1)(A) or paragraph (1)(B) in a fiscal year shall not exceed the funds appropriated under paragraph (1) or (2), respectively, of subsection (f) for such payments for that fiscal year.

“(B) PRO RATA REDUCTIONS OF PAYMENTS FOR DIRECT EXPENSES.—If the Secretary determines that the amount of funds appropriated under subsection (f)(1) for a fiscal year is insufficient to provide the total amount of payments otherwise due for such periods under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall reduce the amounts so payable on a pro rata basis to reflect such shortfall.

“(C) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT FOR DIRECT GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount determined under this subsection for payments to a children’s hospital for direct graduate expenses relating to approved graduate medical residency training programs for a fiscal year is equal to the product of—

“(A) the updated per resident amount for direct graduate medical education, as determined under paragraph (2); and

“(B) the average number of full-time equivalent residents in the hospital’s graduate approved medical residency training programs (as determined under section 1886(h)(4) of the Social Security Act during the fiscal year.

“(2) UPDATED PER RESIDENT AMOUNT FOR DIRECT GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION.—The updated per resident amount for direct graduate medical education for a hospital for a fiscal year is an amount determined as follows:

“(A) DETERMINATION OF HOSPITAL SINGLE PER RESIDENT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall compute for each hospital operating an approved graduate medical education program (regardless of whether or not it is a children’s hospital) a single per resident amount equal to the average (weighted by number of full-time equivalent residents) of the primary care per resident amount and the non-primary care per resident amount computed under section 1886(h)(2) of the Social Security Act for cost reporting periods ending during fiscal year 1997.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF WAGE AND NON-WAGE-RELATED PROPORTION OF THE SINGLE PER RESIDENT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall estimate the average proportion of the single per resident amounts computed under subparagraph (A) that is attributable to wages and wage-related costs.

“(C) STANDARDIZING PER RESIDENT AMOUNTS.—The Secretary shall establish a standardized per resident amount for each such hospital—

“(i) by dividing the single per resident amount computed under subparagraph (A) into a wage-related portion and a non-wage-related portion by applying the proportion determined under subparagraph (B);

“(ii) by dividing the wage-related portion by the factor applied under section 1886(d)(3)(E) of the Social Security Act for discharges occurring during fiscal year 1999 for the hospital’s area; and

“(iii) by adding the non-wage-related portion to the amount computed under clause (ii).

“(D) DETERMINATION OF NATIONAL AVERAGE.—The Secretary shall compute a national average per resident amount equal to

the average of the standardized per resident amounts computed under subparagraph (C) for such hospitals, with the amount for each hospital weighted by the average number of full-time equivalent residents at such hospital.

“(E) APPLICATION TO INDIVIDUAL HOSPITALS.—The Secretary shall compute for each such hospital that is a children’s hospital a per resident amount—

“(i) by dividing the national average per resident amount computed under subparagraph (D) into a wage-related portion and a non-wage-related portion by applying the proportion determined under subparagraph (B);

“(ii) by multiplying the wage-related portion by the factor described in subparagraph (C)(ii) for the hospital’s area; and

“(iii) by adding the non-wage-related portion to the amount computed under clause (ii).

“(F) UPDATING RATE.—The Secretary shall update such per resident amount for each such children’s hospital by the estimated percentage increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers during the period beginning October 1997 and ending with the midpoint of the hospital’s cost reporting period that begins during fiscal year 2000.

“(d) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT FOR INDIRECT MEDICAL EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount determined under this subsection for payments to a children’s hospital for indirect expenses associated with the treatment of more severely ill patients and the additional costs related to the teaching of residents for a fiscal year is equal to an amount determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(2) FACTORS.—In determining the amount under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(A) take into account variations in case mix among children’s hospitals and the number of full-time equivalent residents in the hospitals’ approved graduate medical residency training programs; and

“(B) assure that the aggregate of the payments for indirect expenses associated with the treatment of more severely ill patients and the additional costs related to the teaching of residents under this section in a fiscal year are equal to the amount appropriated for such expenses for the fiscal year involved under subsection (f)(2).

“(e) MAKING OF PAYMENTS.—

“(1) INTERIM PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall determine, before the beginning of each fiscal year involved for which payments may be made for a hospital under this section, the amounts of the payments for direct graduate medical education and indirect medical education for such fiscal year and shall (subject to paragraph (2)) make the payments of such amounts in 26 equal interim installments during such period.

“(2) WITHHOLDING.—The Secretary shall withhold up to 25 percent from each interim installment for direct graduate medical education paid under paragraph (1).

“(3) RECONCILIATION.—At the end of each fiscal year for which payments may be made under this section, the hospital shall submit to the Secretary such information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to determine the percent (if any) of the total amount withheld under paragraph (2) that is due under this section for the hospital for the fiscal year. Based on such determination, the Secretary shall recoup any overpayments made, or pay any balance due. The amount so determined shall be considered a final intermediary determination for purposes of applying section 1878 of the Social

Security Act and shall be subject to review under that section in the same manner as the amount of payment under section 1886(d) of such Act is subject to review under such section.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) DIRECT GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—There are hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for payments under subsection (b)(1)(A)—

“(i) for fiscal year 2000, \$90,000,000; and

“(ii) for fiscal year 2001, \$95,000,000.

“(B) CARRYOVER OF EXCESS.—The amounts appropriated under subparagraph (A) for fiscal year 2000 shall remain available for obligation through the end of fiscal year 2001.

“(2) INDIRECT MEDICAL EDUCATION.—There are hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for payments under subsection (b)(1)(A)—

“(A) for fiscal year 2000, \$190,000,000; and

“(B) for fiscal year 2001, \$190,000,000.

“(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) APPROVED GRADUATE MEDICAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAM.—The term ‘approved graduate medical residency training program’ has the meaning given the term ‘approved medical residency training program’ in section 1886(h)(5)(A) of the Social Security Act.

“(2) CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL.—The term ‘children’s hospital’ means a hospital described in section 1886(d)(1)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act.

“(3) DIRECT GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION COSTS.—The term ‘direct graduate medical education costs’ has the meaning given such term in section 1886(h)(5)(C) of the Social Security Act.”

SEC. 5. STUDY REGARDING SHORTAGES OF LICENSED PHARMACISTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”), acting through the appropriate agencies of the Public Health Service, shall conduct a study to determine whether and to what extent there is a shortage of licensed pharmacists. In carrying out the study, the Secretary shall seek the comments of appropriate public and private entities regarding any such shortage.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete the study under subsection (a) and submit to the Congress a report that describes the findings made through the study and that contains a summary of the comments received by the Secretary pursuant to such subsection.

SEC. 6. REPORT ON TELEMEDICINE.

Not later than January 10, 2001, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Congress a report that—

(1) identifies any factors that inhibit the expansion and accessibility of telemedicine services, including factors relating to telemedicine networks;

(2) identifies any factors that, in addition to geographical isolation, should be used to determine which patients need or require access to telemedicine care;

(3) determines the extent to which—

(A) patients receiving telemedicine service have benefited from the services, and are satisfied with the treatment received pursuant to the services; and

(B) the medical outcomes for such patients would have differed if telemedicine services had not been available to the patients;

(4) determines the extent to which physicians involved with telemedicine services

have been satisfied with the medical aspects of the services;

(5) determines the extent to which primary care physicians are enhancing their medical knowledge and experience through the interaction with specialists provided by telemedicine consultations; and

(6) identifies legal and medical issues relating to State licensing of health professionals that are presented by telemedicine services, and provides any recommendations of the Secretary for responding to such issues.

SEC. 7. CERTAIN TECHNOLOGIES AND PRACTICES REGARDING SURVIVAL RATES FOR CARDIAC ARREST.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, in consultation with the Administrator of the General Services Administration and other appropriate public and private entities, develop recommendations regarding the placement of automatic external defibrillators in Federal buildings as a means of improving the survival rates of individuals who experience cardiac arrest in such buildings, including recommendations on training, maintenance, and medical oversight, and on coordinating with the system for emergency medical services.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the Senate bill, S. 580, and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS SUSTAINABILITY ACT OF 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 791) to amend the Small Business Act with respect to the women's business center program, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I do not intend to object, but I rise in strong support of Senate bill S. 791, the Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act of 1999. This is the Senate version of H.R. 491, which the House recently passed under suspension. With the passage of this bill, we will ensure that the women's business centers keep their doors open, and that the program will continue to grow with new centers in previously underserved areas.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) for all her hard work and leadership on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, under my reservation, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) to explain her unanimous consent request.

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Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of S. 791 is to allow for currently funded Women's Business Centers and graduated Business Women's Centers to re compete for Federal funding. S. 791 addresses the funding constraints that make it increasingly difficult for Women's Business Centers to sustain the level of services they provide and, in some instances, to remain open after they graduate from the Women's Business Centers Program and no longer receive Federal matching funds.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate Bill 791, "The Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act of 1999."

Women-owned businesses are the fastest growing sector of small business in America today. In fact, women entrepreneurs are starting new firms at twice the rate of all other business and own nearly 40 percent of all firms in the U.S.

These strong numbers show the success that women entrepreneurs enjoy, but anyone who has ever started a new business, knows that the road is not always smooth. Women's Business Centers play a major role in making that road to success a little less bumpy. Women's Business Centers, like the public-private partnership of the St. Louis Women's Business Center in my District, play a major role in assisting women entrepreneurs establish strong business plans through courses, workshops, mentor services and provide access to financing for building businesses.

H.R. 1497 builds upon the legislation we passed earlier this year to help grow the number of Women's Business Centers across the nation. But as with anything, we must continue to take a well-balanced approach that allows successful centers to continue to compete for funding as they make the transition to the private sector. The Women's Business Center Sustainability Act makes it possible for Centers like the St. Louis Women's Business Center to have a sort of safety net as they make that transition at the end of their 5-year grant cycle.

Mr. Speaker, Women's Business Centers contribute to the success of thousands of women entrepreneurs by offering the critical community support necessary for them to succeed in today's business world. As more and more women decide to be their own boss, Women's Business Centers will provide them with the resources and training they need. I commend the spirit and innovation of all those whose entrepreneurial spirit has made America great and I urge my colleagues to support passage of the Women's Business Center Sustainability Act.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 791 the Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act. Women entrepreneurs are an increasingly significant part of the U.S. economy. Women own more than 8 million businesses and account for approximately one-third of all U.S. businesses and are starting businesses at twice the rate of men.

Shrouded by these stirring statistics, is the fact that women encounter numerous obstacles trying to start, maintain or expand a business—obstacles which must be eliminated if we are ever to realize the full potential of this dynamic sector of our economy.

In my particular District, there exists several entities that help women's small businesses expand, in some instances, get started. I am very proud of these organizations for their dedication and hard work. In a very orderly and organized way, without a lot of overhead, women's business centers, by various names, are helping women who have an idea about a small business, providing them with technical assistance, in some instances to provide micro loans, and in all instances to provide the knowledge and wherewithal and planning that is necessary so that they start off on the right foot. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to vote for this mindfall, well thought out bill and support our Nation's women's businesses.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 791

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Women's Business Centers Sustainability Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) the term 'private nonprofit organization' means an entity that is described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code;"; and

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting "nonprofit" after "private".

SEC. 3. INCREASED MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS.

Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (h) and inserting the following:

"(h) PROGRAM EXAMINATION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administration shall—

"(A) develop and implement an annual programmatic and financial examination of each women's business center established pursuant to this section, pursuant to which each such center shall provide to the Administration—

"(i) an itemized cost breakdown of actual expenditures for costs incurred during the preceding year; and

"(ii) documentation regarding the amount of matching assistance from non-Federal sources obtained and expended by the center during the preceding year in order to meet the requirements of subsection (c) and, with