

(1) the House should enact legislation that would consolidate thirty-one Federal K-12 education programs; and

(2) the Department of Education, the States, and local educational agencies should work together to ensure that not less than 95 percent of all funds appropriated for the purpose of carrying out elementary and secondary education programs administered by the Department of Education is spent for our children in their classrooms.

**SEC. 12. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON ASSET-BUILDING FOR THE WORKING POOR.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) 33 percent of all American households have no or negative financial assets and 60 percent of African-American households have no or negative financial assets;

(2) 46.9 percent of all children in America live in households with no financial assets, including 40 percent of caucasian children and 75 percent of African-American children;

(3) in order to provide low-income families with more tools for empowerment, incentives which encourage asset-building should be established;

(4) across the Nation numerous small public, private, and public-private asset-building initiatives (including individual development account programs) are demonstrating success at empowering low-income workers;

(5) the Government currently provides middle and upper income Americans with hundreds of billions of dollars in tax incentives for building assets; and

(6) the Government should utilize tax laws or other measures to provide low-income Americans with incentives to work and build assets in order to escape poverty permanently.

(b) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that any changes in tax law should include provisions which encourage low-income workers and their families to save for buying their first home, starting a business, obtaining an education, or taking other measures to prepare for the future.

**SEC. 13. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE AND PRESERVING HOME HEALTH SERVICES FOR ALL MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.**

(a) ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(A) 43.4 million Americans are currently without health insurance, and that this number is expected to rise to nearly 60 million people in the next 10 years;

(B) the cost of health insurance continues to rise, a key factor in increasing the number of uninsured; and

(C) there is a consensus that working Americans and their families and children will suffer from reduced access to health insurance.

(2) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE INSURANCE.—It is the sense of the Congress that access to affordable health care coverage for all Americans is a priority of the 106th Congress.

(b) PRESERVING HOME HEALTH SERVICE FOR ALL MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(A) the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 reformed Medicare home health care spending by instructing the Health Care Financing Administration to implement a prospective payment system and instituted an interim payment system to achieve savings;

(B) the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, reformed the interim payment system to increase reimbursements to low-cost providers, added \$900 million in funding, and delayed the automatic 15 percent payment reduction for one year, to October 1, 2000; and

(C) patients whose care is more extensive and expensive than the typical Medicare patient do not receive supplemental payments in the interim payment system but will receive special protection in the home health care prospective payment system.

(2) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON ACCESS TO HOME HEALTH CARE.—It is the sense of the Congress that—

(A) Congress recognizes the importance of home health care for seniors and disabled citizens;

(B) Congress and the Administration should work together to maintain quality care for patients whose care is more extensive and expensive than the typical Medicare patient, including the sickest and frailest Medicare beneficiaries, while home health care agencies operate in the interim payment system; and

(C) Congress and the Administration should work together to avoid the implementation of the 15 percent reduction in the interim payment system and ensure timely implementation of the prospective payment system.

**SEC. 14. SENSE OF THE HOUSE ON MEDICARE PAYMENT.**

(a) FINDINGS.—The House finds that—

(1) a goal of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 was to expand options for Medicare beneficiaries under the new Medicare+Choice program;

(2) Medicare+Choice was intended to make these choices available to all Medicare beneficiaries; and unfortunately, during the first two years of the Medicare+Choice program the blended payment was not implemented, stifling health care options and continuing regional disparity among many counties across the United States; and

(3) the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 also established the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare to develop legislative recommendations to address the long-term funding challenges facing Medicare.

(b) SENSE OF THE HOUSE.—It is the sense of the House that this resolution assumes that funding of the Medicare+Choice program is a priority for the House Committee on the Budget before financing new programs and benefits that may potentially add to the imbalance of payments and benefits in Fee-for-Service Medicare and Medicare+Choice.

**SEC. 15. SENSE OF THE HOUSE ON ASSESSMENT OF WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of the House that, recognizing the need to maximize the benefit of the Welfare-to-Work Program, the Secretary of Labor should prepare a report on Welfare-to-Work Programs pursuant to section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act. This report should include information on the following—

(1) the extent to which the funds available under such section have been used (including the number of States that have not used any of such funds), the types of programs that have received such funds, the number of and characteristics of the recipients of assistance under such programs, the goals of such programs, the duration of such programs, the costs of such programs, any evidence of the effects of such programs on such recipients, and accounting of the total amount expended by the States from such funds, and the rate at which the Secretary expects such funds to be expended for each of the fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002;

(2) with regard to the unused funds allocated for Welfare-to-Work for each of fiscal years 1998 and 1999, identify areas of the Nation that have unmet needs for Welfare-to-Work initiatives; and

(3) identify possible Congressional action that may be taken to reprogram Welfare-to-Work funds from States that have not utilized previously allocated funds to places of unmet need, including those States that have rejected or otherwise not utilized prior funding.

(b) REPORT.—It is the sense of the House that, not later than January 1, 2000, the Secretary of Labor should submit to the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, in writing, the report described in subsection (a).

**SEC. 16. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON PROVIDING HONOR GUARD SERVICES FOR VETERANS' FUNERALS.**

It is the sense of the Congress that all relevant congressional committees should make every effort to provide sufficient resources so that an Honor Guard, if requested, is available for veterans' funerals.

**SEC. 17. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS ON CHILD NUTRITION.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) both Republicans and Democrats understand that an adequate diet and proper nutrition are essential to a child's general well-being;

(2) the lack of an adequate diet and proper nutrition may adversely affect a child's ability to perform up to his or her ability in school;

(3) the Government currently plays a role in funding school nutrition programs; and

(4) there is a bipartisan commitment to helping children learn.

(b) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Agriculture should examine our Nation's nutrition programs to determine if they can be improved, particularly with respect to services to low-income children.

**APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAJORITY LEADER**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces the following appointments on behalf of the majority leader:

Pursuant to provisions of section 3(b) of Public Law 105-341, the following individuals are appointed to the Women's Progress Commemoration Commission: Elaine L. Chao of Kentucky; Amy M. Holmes of Washington, DC; and Patricia C. Lamar of Mississippi.

**APPOINTMENTS BY THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces the appointment of the following Senators on behalf of the Democratic Leader:

Pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 105-244, the following Senator is appointed to serve as a member of the Web-Based Education Commission: the Honorable JEFF BINGAMAN of New Mexico.

Pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 99-304, as amended by Public Law 99-7, the Chair announces the appointment as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Senator FRANK R. LAUTENBERG of New Jersey; Senator BOB GRAHAM of Florida; Senator RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD of