

109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 5955

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide payment under part A of the Medicare Program on a reasonable cost basis for anesthesia services furnished by an anesthesiologist in certain rural hospitals in the same manner as payments are provided for anesthesia services furnished by anesthesiologist assistants and certified registered nurse anesthetists in such hospitals.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2006

Mr. AKIN (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. GOHMERT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

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## A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide payment under part A of the Medicare Program on a reasonable cost basis for anesthesia services furnished by an anesthesiologist in certain rural hospitals in the same manner as payments are provided for anesthesia services furnished by anesthesiologist assistants and certified registered nurse anesthetists in such hospitals.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE .**

2       This Act may be cited as the “Medicare Access to  
3 Rural Anesthesiology Act of 2006”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5       Congress finds the following:

6           (1) There is an acknowledged shortage of anes-  
7 thesia professionals in rural hospitals. Research indi-  
8 cates that surgeons in many rural hospitals are per-  
9 forming and would like to perform more complex  
10 surgeries that could be made safer and more prac-  
11 tical if anesthesia services were provided by an anes-  
12 thesiologist.

13           (2) As medical doctors and doctors of osteop-  
14 athy, anesthesiologists are excluded from competing  
15 to assure the availability of anesthesia services in  
16 certain rural areas because only anesthesiologist as-  
17 sistants and certified registered nurse anesthetists  
18 are eligible for special pass-through payments under  
19 part A of the Medicare program for anesthesia serv-  
20 ices furnished in certain rural hospitals.

21           (3) The Centers of Medicare and Medicaid  
22 Services has stated that a statutory change is nec-  
23 essary to allow anesthesiologists to receive payment  
24 under part A of the Medicare program on a reason-  
25 able cost basis for anesthesia services provided.

1 **SEC. 3. MEDICARE PART A PAYMENT FOR ANESTHESIOLOGIST SERVICES IN CERTAIN RURAL HOSPITALS BASED ON CRNA PASS-THROUGH RULES.**

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4  
5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1814 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395f) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

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7  
8 “Anesthesiologist Services Provided in Certain Rural  
9 Hospitals

10 “(m)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this  
11 title, coverage and payment shall be provided under this  
12 part for physicians’ services that are anesthesia services  
13 furnished by a physician who is an anesthesiologist in a  
14 rural hospital described in paragraph (3) in the same  
15 manner as payment is made under the exception provided  
16 in section 9320(k) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation  
17 Act of 1986, as amended by section 6132 of the Omnibus  
18 Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989, (42 U.S.C. 1395k  
19 note) (relating to payment on a reasonable cost, pass-  
20 through basis) for certified registered nurse anesthetist  
21 services furnished by a certified registered nurse anes-  
22 thetist in a hospital described in such section.

23 “(2) No payment shall be made under any other pro-  
24 vision of this title for physicians’ services for which pay-  
25 ment is made under this subsection.

1       “(3) A rural hospital described in this paragraph is  
2 a hospital described in section 9320(k) of the Omnibus  
3 Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986, as so amended, (42  
4 U.S.C. 1395k note) except that—

5           “(A) any reference in such section to a ‘cer-  
6 tified registered nurse anesthetist’ or ‘anesthetist’ is  
7 deemed a reference to a ‘physician who is an anes-  
8 thesiologist’ or ‘anesthesiologist’, respectively; and

9           “(B) any reference to ‘January 1, 1988’ or  
10 ‘1987’ is deemed a reference to such date and year  
11 as the Secretary shall specify.”.

12       (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
13 subsection (a) shall apply to services furnished during cost  
14 reporting periods beginning on or after the date of the  
15 enactment of this Act.

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