

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 363

Providing that all House of Representatives meetings and hearings on health care legislation shall be open to the public, and expressing the sense of the House that the Senate and the Executive Branch should allow public access to the process of health care reform.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 11, 1994

Mr. TORKILDSEN (for himself, Mr. BLUTE, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. KIM, Mr. QUINN, Mr. MICA, Mr. BAKER of California, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. GOSS, Mr. BUYER, Mr. LINDER, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. BUNNING, and Mr. BE-REUTER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Rules and Government Operations

RESOLUTION

Providing that all House of Representatives meetings and hearings on health care legislation shall be open to the public, and expressing the sense of the House that the Senate and the Executive Branch should allow public access to the process of health care reform.

Whereas the President has brought the vital issue of national health care reform to the forefront of national policy debate;

Whereas every American has a vital interest in the outcome of the health care debate;

Whereas 37,000,000 Americans are currently uninsured and must be covered under any national policy;

Whereas the 223,000,000 Americans who are insured also have a vital interest in the outcome of this debate;

Whereas, despite cost problems, especially for small businesses, Americans who are insured receive care that is the envy of the world;

Whereas many health care reform plans provide for universal coverage administered by the Federal Government, which would further entrench the Federal Government in the lives of every American, regardless of age, income, or location;

Whereas many Americans have legitimate concerns that health care reform will create a costly, inefficient government bureaucracy;

Whereas Americans have legitimate concerns that the resulting health care program will fall short of the worthy goal of providing every American with affordable, quality health care;

Whereas Republicans and Democrats in both the House of Representatives and the Senate have offered a variety of proposed solutions to the health care problem;

Whereas President and Mrs. Clinton, and Cabinet members, have been holding public forums across the country to raise public awareness of, and foster debate over the solution to, this pressing problem;

Whereas the Federal Government should serve as a partner to the American people in solving the health care problem;

Whereas the public already views the Congress and the Federal Government as institutions that are out of touch with the public's needs and concerns;

Whereas the Republic was founded as a democracy “of the people, by the people and for the people”;

Whereas, with the exception of national security, there are few reasons for the Federal Government to act behind closed doors while formulating policy that will affect each 1 of the approximately 260,000,000 Americans;

Whereas the Rules of the House provide that committee and subcommittee hearings, and meetings for the transaction of business, shall be open to the public unless the committee or subcommittee determines otherwise by specified procedures;

Whereas the Rules of the Senate and statutes applying to the Executive Branch provide that some Senate and Executive Branch meetings and hearings shall be open to the public;

Whereas there are concerns regarding the lack of public and media access to previous proceedings of the President’s Task Force on National Health Care Reform; and

Whereas too much of the health care debate has already taken place behind closed doors and out of the public’s view: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) all House of Representatives hearings and
3 meetings at the subcommittee, full committee, and
4 conference committee level regarding health care leg-
5 islation shall be open to the public and the media,
6 except as provided in clause 2(g)(2) of House Rule
7 XI (regarding disclosures that would endanger the
8 national security, violate a law or rule of the House,

1 or tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any per-
2 son); and

3 (2) it is the sense of the House that the Senate
4 and the Executive Branch should guarantee public
5 and media access to meetings and hearings concern-
6 ing the reform of health care legislation.

○