

RESOLUTION 7-S.F.No. 2699

A resolution memorializing the Congress of the United States to remove Medicaid policy barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

WHEREAS, seventy-four percent of working-age adults with severe disabilities are unemployed; and

WHEREAS, many people with disabilities are highly dependent on local, state, and federal assistance for support and survival, particularly for necessary health care; and

WHEREAS, a 1995 Lou Harris poll reported that two-thirds of unemployed people with disabilities are eager to work; and

WHEREAS, advances in technology, the civil rights protections of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the current labor shortage are opening up many new employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, current government policies, particularly those relating to Medicaid, discourage people with disabilities from working; and

WHEREAS, existing Medicaid work incentives are flawed and are completely unavailable to people with disabilities who do not qualify for the SSI 1619(b) program; and

WHEREAS, removing policy barriers to employment would enable more people with disabilities to reduce their dependence on Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, food stamps, and other state, local, and federal government programs; and

WHEREAS, becoming employed allows individuals with disabilities to contribute to society by becoming taxpayers themselves; and

WHEREAS, employer-based health care and government programs, such as Medicare, Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association, and MinnesotaCare, do not typically cover long-term supports needed by people with disabilities; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota that it urges the Congress of the United States to adopt Medicaid buy-in legislation that would allow people with permanent disabilities to retain Medicaid coverage to address unmet health needs when they become employed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such Medicaid buy-in legislation should require individuals to take advantage of employer-based health coverage, if available and affordable, and should further require individuals to purchase needed Medicaid coverage on a sliding fee scale, based on their ability to pay.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota is directed to prepare copies of this memorial and transmit them to the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and Minnesota's Senators and Representatives in Congress.

Presented to the governor March 16, 1998

Filed with the Secretary of State March 18, 1998