

1 State of Arkansas  
2 84th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2003

*As Engrossed: H2/18/03*

SCR 4

4  
5 By: Senator Faris

6 *By: Representatives Scrimshire, Bradford, Biggs, Berry, Borhauer, Creekmore, Dees, Eason, Goss, J.*  
7 *Johnson, Judy, Key, Lendall, Martin, Medley, Pace, S. Prater, Pritchard, Roebuck, Sumpter*

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10 **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

11 REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS ENACT  
12 A MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT.

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14 **Subtitle**

15 REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES  
16 CONGRESS ENACT A MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION  
17 DRUG BENEFIT.

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20 WHEREAS, the use of prescription drugs improves the quality of care and  
21 helps patients live healthier, longer, and more productive lives while  
22 keeping them out of more costly acute care settings in the long term; and  
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24 WHEREAS, the increased use of new and improved prescription drugs has  
25 changed the delivery of health care in the United States since Medicare was  
26 enacted, and while two-thirds (2/3) of the Medicare population has some form  
27 of prescription drug coverage, although for many people that coverage is  
28 inadequate, one third (1/3) of Medicare beneficiaries have no coverage at  
29 all; and  
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31 WHEREAS, Congress did not enact a drug benefit in the Medicare program,  
32 leaving the program inadequate in providing the elderly and disabled with the  
33 most appropriate drug therapies, and preventing the delivery of high quality  
34 health care at an affordable cost; and  
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36 WHEREAS, the private sector provides affordable coverage by negotiating



1 discounts on drugs and meeting the needs of special populations with chronic  
2 diseases and those with comorbidities through coordinating care with disease  
3 management, drug utilization review, and patient education programs, all of  
4 which aid in ameliorating medical errors; and  
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6 WHEREAS, comprehensive reform of the Medicare program would use the  
7 successful tools of the private sector to coordinate care for this population  
8 and would use the marketplace to foster competition among private plans,  
9 resulting in more choices of high quality coverage for seniors and the  
10 disabled while maintaining the financial sustainability of the program; and  
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12 WHEREAS, Congress has failed to provide for comprehensive reform of  
13 Medicare, encouraging states to use their own resources to ease the burden on  
14 their elderly and disabled populations and effectively requiring states to  
15 assume an unfunded, informal mandate; and  
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17 WHEREAS, in implementing state programs to assist the Medicare  
18 population, state budgetary constraints can often result in restrictions and  
19 limitations on patient access to needed prescription drugs, coupled with  
20 enactment of anti-competitive price controls,  
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22 NOW THEREFORE,

23 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
24 STATE OF ARKANSAS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:  
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26 That the Eighty-Fourth General Assembly of the State of Arkansas  
27 requests that the United States House of Representatives and the United  
28 States Senate enact financially sustainable, voluntary, universal, and  
29 privately administered outpatient prescription drug coverage as part of the  
30 federal Medicare program.  
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, with the  
33 House of Representatives concurring therein, the Clerk of the Arkansas Senate  
34 shall transmit copies to the presiding officer of the United States Senate  
35 and the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the  
36 Arkansas congressional delegation.

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*/s/ Faris*