

State of Arkansas

77th General Assembly

Regular Session, 1989

H.R.

1022

By: Representative Dowd

HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING ARKANSAS' CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SUPPORT NOT ONLY PHYSICIAN PAYMENT REFORM BUT PATIENT PAYMENT REFORM AS WELL BY REQUIRING PHYSICIANS TO ACCEPT MEDICARE'S REASONABLE CHARGES FOR FULL PAYMENT FOR TREATMENT OF MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.

WHEREAS, 14.3% of the population of Arkansas is over age 65 and depends on Medicare for their basic health care coverage, many of them living on very limited incomes, including 26.8% living below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, many physicians in Arkansas do not accept assignment on Medicare Part B claims, forcing their Medicare patients to pay the balance out of their own pockets, with unassigned Medicare Part B claims in Arkansas for fiscal year 1988 adding an additional \$12,389,800 in costs for Medicare beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, Congress is considering proposals for Medicare physician payment reform, which would increase Medicare payments to primary care physicians; and

WHEREAS, it was the intent of the Congress when Medicare was adopted that beneficiaries' payments for physician services should be limited to the deductible and co-payments; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has passed a Medicare Catastrophic Act, which increases Medicare benefits and premiums, but still leaves the Medicare beneficiary responsible for the balance of unassigned claims,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

That the Arkansas General Assembly hereby urges Arkansas' Congressional

Delegation to support not only physician payment reform, but patient payment reform as well, by requiring physicians to accept Medicare's reasonable charges as full payment for treatment of Medicare beneficiaries.