

S 2105 IS

110th CONGRESS

1st Session

S. 2105

To provide for the establishment of the Federal Health Care Board.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

September 27, 2007

Mr. HAGEL introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of the Federal Health Care Board.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the `Federal Health Care Board Act of 2007'.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL HEALTH CARE BOARD.

(a) Federal Health Care Board-

(1) ESTABLISHMENT-

(A) IN GENERAL- There is established an independent agency in the executive branch of the United States Government to be known as the Federal Health Care Board (in this section referred to as the `Board').

(B) COMPOSITION- The Board shall be composed of--

(i) the members of the Board of Governors described in paragraph (3); and

(ii) the members of the 12 Regional Boards described in

paragraph (4)(B).

(2) DUTIES OF BOARD-

(A) ACCESS, QUALITY, AND COST- The Board shall--

(i) ensure that Americans have access to health insurance and provide certain basic facts about health care services prior to receiving the care;

(ii) ensure providers are delivering safe, evidence-based, high quality care, and are transparent about pricing through disclosure of actual costs;

(iii) demand transparency for disclosure of actual costs and pricing from providers and payers through an information clearinghouse;

(iv) establish--

(I) a national standard for a basic health insurance plan, including a basic minimum policy and the regional cost for such policy;

(II) a national protocol and standard for secure, universal, and individual electronic medical record;

(III) loan forgiveness programs for health care providers who serve in underserved areas;

(IV) scholarship programs for health care providers who serve in underserved areas;

(V) a national standard for public health services, including safety net providers; and

(VI) model dispute resolution procedures for malpractice claims that States may adopt; and

(v) carry out the activities as provided under paragraph (4).

(B) MONITORING- The Board shall monitor progress toward the objectives identified in subparagraph (A).

(3) BOARD OF GOVERNORS-

(A) NUMBER- The Board of Governors shall be composed of 12

members who shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, of whom 1 shall be appointed from each of the 12 regions described in paragraph (4)(A). The President shall appoint individuals to serve on the Board of Governors not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) TERMS-

(i) **IN GENERAL-** A member of the Board of Governors shall be appointed for a term of 14 years.

(ii) **LIMITATION-** A member of the Board of Governors shall not be eligible for reappointment if such individual served a full term of 14 years.

(C) CHAIRPERSON; VICE-CHAIRPERSON-

(i) **IN GENERAL-** The President shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the Senate, 1 member of the Board of Governors to be Chairperson of the Board, and 1 member of such Board to be Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

(ii) **TERM-** A member appointed as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson under subclause (I) shall serve as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson for a term of 4 years.

(D) VACANCIES-

(i) **IN GENERAL-** A vacancy on the Board of Governors shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made and shall be subject to any conditions which applied to the original appointment.

(ii) **FILLING UNEXPIRED TERM-** An individual appointed to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term of the members replaced and may be reappointed to serve a full 14-year term.

(E) SELECTION- The members of the Board of Governors shall be individuals with significant health care expertise, including expertise in clinical health care, health care quality research, public health, health care research, purchaser organizations, rural health care, the uninsured, chronic disease management, long-term care, nursing, primary care, vision care, dental care, mental health care, and health care higher education.

(4) REGIONAL BOARDS-

(A) ESTABLISHMENT- Not later than 1 year after the appointment of the initial members of the Board of Governors, the Board of Governors shall establish 12 regions of the United States.

(B) REGIONAL BOARDS-

(i) IN GENERAL- In each of the 12 regions established under subparagraph (A), there shall be established a Regional Board. Each Regional Board shall be based in a major United States city.

(ii) COMPOSITION- Each Regional Board shall be composed of 8 members who shall be--

(I) health care experts; and

(II) appointed by the members of the Board of Governors.

(iii) TERM- A member of a Regional Board shall be appointed for a term of 8 years.

(iv) DUTIES OF REGIONAL BOARDS- Each Regional Board shall provide the Board of Governors with considerations that are relevant to the population served by such Regional Board.

(5) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY- Subject to the availability of funds, the Board may enter into contracts and make other arrangements, as may be necessary to carry out the duties described in paragraph (2).

(6) STAFF- Upon the request of the Board, the President may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the National Institutes of Health, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, to the Board to assist in carrying out this subsection.

(7) REPORTS TO CONGRESS- Not later than 1 year after the establishment of the Board, and annually thereafter, the Board shall submit a report to Congress. Each such report shall include--

(A) an inventory of recommendations for improved coordination and integration of policy and programs;

(B) an assessment of achievement of the objectives identified under paragraph (2) and recommendations for realizing such objectives; and

(C) recommendations regarding Federal regulations or administrative policies.

(b) Appropriation-

(1) IN GENERAL- Out of funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for the period of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

(2) AVAILABILITY- Funds appropriated under paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure through fiscal year 2012.

END