

2015 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 109

BY SENATOR HEITMEIER

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Congress on passing doc fix legislation.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the United States Congress on the passage of bipartisan legislation to
3 permanently set the payment amounts that Medicare pays for physician services,
4 known as the doc fix.

5 WHEREAS, the term "doc fix" refers to the formula the federal government uses to
6 pay physicians who treat patients covered by Medicare, who pay less than they would
7 otherwise to see a physician and the federal government makes up the difference and pays
8 the physician an amount determined by Congress; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1997, Congress cut payments to physicians who treat patients
10 enrolled in Medicare in order to help balance the federal budget; and

11 WHEREAS, while Congress had considered cutting the dollars to physicians treating
12 Medicare patients, but did not have the collective will to carry it through, being concerned
13 that some physicians might not continue to treat Medicare patients at a reduced rate, and the
14 cut was postponed until a future date; and

15 WHEREAS, over the last eighteen years Congress has postponed the cut seventeen
16 times and the cut has become a possible twenty percent reduction in payments if the attempt
17 to postpone the cuts failed during this Congress; and

18 WHEREAS, with the current doc fix extension set to expire on March 31, 2015,

1 Congress may consider the need for structural reforms to Medicare generally, not merely a
2 postponement of the cut for another year; and

3 WHEREAS, with the unconscionable cut of more than twenty percent looming
4 without the annual doc fix extension in April, Congress agreed to begin broader structural
5 changes to Medicare, ending the doc fix shell game permanently; and

6 WHEREAS, despite the reality that healthcare is expensive and that the annual re-
7 visiting of the doc fix formula of paying physicians was, at least, a bad way to govern, a
8 bipartisan solution proved attainable even in a time when merely entertaining an idea from
9 the other side of the aisle is often unthinkable; and

10 WHEREAS, with the reality that one political party leads both houses of Congress
11 and the other holds the presidency, true bipartisanship is the only path to successfully
12 attacking any of the country's issues, yet that bipartisanship is noticeably absent in the
13 discussion of most of those issues; and

14 WHEREAS, while partisan differences have been more likely to win the day, the
15 ability to craft a bipartisan doc fix solution requires the leadership of both political parties
16 in both houses to focus on solutions rather than differences, and for that both the leadership
17 and the members of Congress as a whole should be heartily congratulated; and

18 WHEREAS, in reaching agreement on the end to the doc fix extensions, Congress
19 has begun the daunting task of reforming and restructuring America's entitlement programs,
20 a beginning worthy of note and of acclaim.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
22 does hereby commend the United States Congress on the passage of bipartisan legislation
23 to permanently set the payment amounts that Medicare pays for physician services, known
24 as the doc fix.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
26 presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the
27 United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

	DIGEST	
SR 109 Original	2015 Regular Session	Heitmeier

Commends Congress on the passage of bipartisan legislation to permanently set the payment amounts that Medicare pays for physician services, known as the doc fix.