

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 10

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By: **Delegates Pitkin, R. Baker, Benson, Boutin, Bronrott, Cadden, Conroy, Conway, Cryor, DeCarlo, Dypski, Frush, Giannetti, Gladden, Glassman, Guns, Heller, Hubers, James, V. Jones, Kopp, Leopold, Malone, Mandel, Minnick, Nathan-Pulliam, Owings, Parrott, Patterson, Riley, Rosso, Snodgrass, Turner, and Valderrama**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2001
Assigned to: Economic Matters

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Crisis in Senior Prescription Drug Care**

3 FOR the purpose of urging the leadership of the Maryland General Assembly to join
4 in and work with the Northeast Legislative Association on Prescription Drug
5 Pricing in formulating and adopting appropriate regional legislative responses
6 to the crisis in senior prescription drug care; and urging the Governor of
7 Maryland to work with the governors of the states participating in the
8 Northeast Legislative Association on Prescription Drug Pricing in implementing
9 appropriate regional responses to the crisis in senior prescription drug care.

10 WHEREAS, According to a March 2000 Kaiser Family Foundation report, 31
11 percent of Medicare beneficiaries do not have prescription drug coverage; and

12 WHEREAS, Spending on prescription drugs nationally has tripled since 1990
13 and it is estimated that spending will again double over the next 8 years, from the
14 \$112 billion spent annually in 2000 to \$243 billion in 2008; and

15 WHEREAS, While the elderly comprise only 13 percent of the nation's total
16 population, they account for over 33 percent of national drug expenditures; and

17 WHEREAS, While Medicare+Choice plans were once an important source of
18 prescription drug coverage for many Medicare beneficiaries in Maryland, 10 of the 11
19 Medicare+Choice programs serving Maryland have withdrawn from the State; and

20 WHEREAS, The spiraling drug costs and diminishing numbers of insurers
21 mean that many of the elderly, who are on a fixed income, must choose between
22 spending on prescription drugs and spending on the basic necessities of life, such as
23 food and housing; and

24 WHEREAS, The Northeast Legislative Association on Prescription Drug
25 Pricing, created in 1999, which includes in its membership legislative leaders from
26 New England, New York, and Pennsylvania, is currently reviewing a number of

1 legislative options that would help seniors gain access to prescription drugs at
2 reasonable prices; and

3 WHEREAS, The options being studied include the creation of an interstate
4 compact and the creation of prescription drug purchasing pools that would leverage
5 the size of the combined population of seniors within the participating states to
6 negotiate reduced drug prices for seniors; and

7 WHEREAS, The Association is seeking the participation of additional states in
8 its efforts; now, therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
10 leadership of the Maryland General Assembly is urged to join in and work with the
11 Northeast Legislative Association on Prescription Drug Pricing in formulating and
12 adopting appropriate regional legislative responses to the crisis in senior prescription
13 drug care; and be it further

14 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
15 Governor of Maryland is urged to work with the governors of the states participating
16 in the Northeast Legislative Association on Prescription Drug Pricing in
17 implementing appropriate regional responses to the crisis in senior prescription drug
18 care -- responses that should include joining any regional compact or drug
19 purchasing pool proposed by the Association; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
21 Legislative Services to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland;
22 The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
23 the Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates.