

Regular Session, 2001

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 79

BY SENATOR SCHEDLER AND REPRESENTATIVES KATZ AND  
WELCH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to apply for a federal grant to study the feasibility of establishing and implementing an optional categorically needy Medicaid eligibility group for working individuals with disabilities, commonly referred to as the "Medicaid Buy-In Program".

WHEREAS, Section 201 of the Ticket to Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TTWWIA) created two new optional categorically needy Medicaid eligibility groups to eliminate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities by improving access to health care; and

WHEREAS, securing and maintaining competitive employment in an integrated setting remains a significant challenge for individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, current statistics show that three out of four individuals with significant disabilities are not working; and

WHEREAS, one of the major barriers for individuals with disabilities is the fear of losing comprehensive health care coverage if they work; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Louisianians with disabilities who want to work and pay taxes are thereby forced to depend on state and federal assistance; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana citizens with disabilities represent an untapped and often skilled labor pool; and

WHEREAS, eighteen states throughout the nation have already

established Medicaid Buy-In Programs; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Health Care Financing Administration, has grant funds available to states to assist in the planning and designing of Medicaid Buy-In Programs; and

WHEREAS, these grant funds require no state matching funds; and

WHEREAS, such Medicaid Buy-In Programs allow beneficiaries with disabilities to pay a premium and retain their health care benefits, and allow individuals with disabilities to contribute tax dollars.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to apply for a federal grant to study the feasibility of establishing and implementing an optional categorically needy Medicaid eligibility group for working individuals with disabilities, commonly referred to as the "Medicaid Buy-in Program" for working individuals with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an advisory council shall be established to consult with the department in conducting the study and shall be composed of one member appointed by and representing each of the following:

- (1) Mental Health Association in Louisiana.
- (2) NAMI-Louisiana.
- (3) Public Mental Health Review Commission.
- (4) Mental Health Planning Council.
- (5) Developmental Disabilities Council.
- (6) HIV/AIDS Alliance.
- (7) Independent Living Council.
- (8) Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation.
- (9) Louisiana Assistive Technology Network.

(10) Multiple Sclerosis Foundation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall report its findings and recommendations regarding establishing and implementing of the Medicaid Buy-In Program to the legislature no later than March 15, 2002.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES