

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES SENATE STOP
PRIVATIZATION OF MEDICARE

Introduced By: Senators Ujifusa, DiPalma, Lauria, Bell, Miller, Acosta, Zurier,
Valverde, Murray, and DiMario

Date Introduced: February 16, 2023

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

1 WHEREAS, In 1965, Congress enacted Medicare because it recognized that most seniors
2 could not get affordable healthcare insurance from private insurers; and

3 WHEREAS, Since its inception, Medicare has had gaps in coverage, such as vision,
4 dental and prescription drugs, and “co-insurance” costs, such as premiums, co-pays and
5 deductibles; and

6 WHEREAS, Instead of fully funding a comprehensive Medicare program, Congress
7 chose to invite private insurance companies to “manage care”; and

8 WHEREAS, Managed care programs, through aggressively marketing plans with lower
9 up-front costs, have sold millions of seniors plans that also shrink their provider networks and
10 establish “gate keeper” and “prior authorization” requirements to limit their care; and

11 WHEREAS, Managed care plan providers have not been shown to significantly save tax
12 dollars and many have been accused of fraud, in court, and of overcharging billions of dollars;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, In 2018, the Trump administration introduced another program to continue
15 to allow private insurance companies to profit from and limit traditional Medicare: Direct
16 Contracting Entities (DCEs); and

17 WHEREAS, DCEs, renamed “Accountable Care Organizations Realizing Equity Access
18 in Community Health” (ACO REACH), can potentially retain twenty-five percent (25%) or more
19 of taxpayer dollars as profit and overhead, and by contrast, traditional Medicare spends ninety-

1 eight percent (98%) of its budget on patient care; and

2 WHEREAS, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Innovation Center is
3 empowered to implement ACO REACH without Congressional approval and plans to move all
4 Medicare patients to a program, like ACO REACH, by 2030; and

5 WHEREAS, Every person who relies on Medicare should have the right to choose
6 traditional Medicare, rather than be forced without their knowledge or consent into a restrictive
7 managed care plan; and

8 WHEREAS, Secretary of Health Becerra has the power to end the ACO REACH
9 program today, and Congress has the power to pressure him to do so; now therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby recognizes the need
11 for the United States government to protect and expand traditional Medicare and hereby
12 respectfully urges Senator Reed, Senator Whitehouse, Congressman Cicilline, and Congressman
13 Magaziner to take all necessary action to stop immediately the ACO REACH program and
14 oppose Medicare privatization; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
16 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Clerk of the United States House of
17 Representatives, the Clerk of the United States Senate, and to members of the Rhode Island
18 Delegation to the United States Congress.

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