

Fifty-eighth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

ENGROSSED SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 4023

Introduced by

Senators Stenehjem, Holmberg, J. Lee

Representatives Berg, Devlin, Price

1 A concurrent resolution urging the Congress to enact a Medicare prescription drug benefit.

2 **WHEREAS**, the use of prescription drugs improves the quality of care and helps
3 patients live healthier, longer, and more productive lives while keeping them out of more costly
4 acute care settings in the long term; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the increased use of new and improved prescription drugs has changed
6 the delivery of health care in the United States since Medicare was enacted, and while
7 two-thirds of the Medicare population has some form of prescription drug coverage, although
8 many times it is inadequate, one-third of Medicare beneficiaries have no coverage at all; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Congress did not enact a drug benefit in the Medicare program therefore,
10 the program is inadequate in providing the elderly and disabled the most appropriate drug
11 therapies, preventing the delivery of quality health care at an affordable cost; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the private sector provides affordable coverage by negotiating discounts on
13 drugs and meeting the needs of special populations with chronic diseases and those with
14 comorbidities through coordinating care with disease management, drug utilization review, and
15 patient education programs, all of which aid in ameliorating medical errors; and

16 **WHEREAS**, comprehensive reform of the Medicare program could utilize the successful
17 tools of the private sector in coordinating care for this population and use the marketplace to
18 foster competition among private plans, resulting in more choices of quality coverage for
19 seniors and the disabled while maintaining the financial sustainability of the program; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Congress's inaction has failed to provide for comprehensive reform of
21 Medicare, encouraging states to use their own resources to ease the burden of their elderly and
22 disabled populations and effectively assume an unfunded, informal mandate; and

23 **WHEREAS**, in implementing state programs to assist the Medicare population, state
24 budgetary constraints can often result in requirements to restrict and limit the patients' access
25 to needed prescription drugs and enact anticompetitive price controls;

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA,**
2 **THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:**

3 That the Fifty-eighth Legislative Assembly urges the Congress of the United States to
4 enact financially sustainable, voluntary, universal, outpatient prescription drug coverage with
5 consideration for privately administered plans as part of the federal Medicare program; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this
7 resolution to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and the President of
8 the United States Senate and to each member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation.