

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4215

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to apply a uniform geographic cost-of-practice index value for physicians' services furnished under the Medicare Program of 1.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 11, 2002

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to apply a uniform geographic cost-of-practice index value for physicians' services furnished under the Medicare Program of 1.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Medicare Access Equity Act of 2002”.

6 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
7 ings:

1 (1) Americans have paid taxes in to the medi-
2 care program equally across the country and every
3 American should have access to quality health care.

4 (2) There is a national market for health care
5 providers.

6 (3) Increasingly, private insurance companies
7 tie their reimbursement rates to those paid by medi-
8 care.

9 (4) The physician fee schedule formula for
10 medicare currently includes several adjustments for
11 variable costs throughout the nation. While it is ap-
12 propriate for the cost of running a practice to reflect
13 overhead differences, physicians should not be com-
14 pensated for their time differently based on where
15 they live.

16 (5) Medicare beneficiaries pay the same part B
17 premium regardless of location which forces sub-
18 sidization of higher reimbursement areas by seniors
19 in lower reimbursement areas without any cor-
20 responding benefit.

21 (6) Areas of the country that currently receive
22 the lowest reimbursement from medicare are often
23 the same areas that are experiencing the greatest
24 shortage of physicians. Attracting more physicians

1 to these areas cannot be achieved without greater
2 equity in medicare reimbursement.

3 **SEC. 2. PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE WAGE INDEX REVISION.**

4 Section 1848(e)(1)(A)(iii) of the Social Security Act
5 (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(e)(1)(A)(iii)) is amended to read as
6 follows:

7 “(iii)(I) for services furnished before
8 2003, an index which reflects $\frac{1}{4}$ of the dif-
9 ference between the relative value of physi-
10 cians’ work effort in each of the different
11 fee schedule areas and the national average
12 of such work effort; and

13 “(II) for services furnished after
14 2002, without regard to any limitation oth-
15 erwise applicable under subsection
16 (c)(2)(B)(ii)(II), an index equal to 1 for
17 relative value of physicians’ work effort in
18 all fee schedule areas.”.

○