

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2522

To amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve oversight of nursing facilities under the Medicare and Medicaid programs by preventing inappropriate influence over surveyors, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2011

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve oversight of nursing facilities under the Medicare and Medicaid programs by preventing inappropriate influence over surveyors, and for other purposes.

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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nursing Home Patient
5 Protection and Standards Act of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. IMPROVING THE RIGOR OF TESTING FOR SUR-**
2 **VEYORS.**

3 (a) **MEDICARE.**—Section 1819(g)(2)(E)(iii) of the
4 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(g)(2)(E)(iii)) is
5 amended by adding the following at the end: “The testing
6 program must be sufficiently rigorous (as determined by
7 the Secretary) to ensure that surveyors are adequately
8 prepared to survey and certify facilities in a consistent and
9 accurate manner.”

10 (b) **MEDICAID.**—Section 1919(g)(2)(E)(iii) of the So-
11 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(g)(2)(E)(iii)) is
12 amended by adding the following at the end: “The testing
13 program must be sufficiently rigorous (as determined by
14 the Secretary) to ensure that surveyors are adequately
15 prepared to survey and certify facilities in a consistent and
16 accurate manner.”

17 **SEC. 3. ENSURING ADEQUATE STAFFING AND TRAINING**
18 **FOR STATE SURVEYS OF NURSING HOMES.**

19 (a) **MEDICARE.**—Section 1819(g)(2)(E) of the Social
20 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(g)(2)(E)) is amended by
21 adding at the end the following:

22 “(iv) **ADEQUATE QUALIFIED STAFF**
23 **FOR SURVEY TEAMS.**—The Secretary, in
24 consultation with the advisory committee
25 under subparagraph (F), shall establish re-
26 quirements for the qualifications and com-

1 pensation of members of a survey team
2 under this subsection and require that a
3 State employs an adequate number of indi-
4 viduals as members of survey teams to en-
5 sure adequate oversight of skilled nursing
6 facilities.

7 “(v) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—In
8 addition to the training and testing pro-
9 gram required under clause (iii), the Sec-
10 retary shall require that State and Federal
11 surveyors regularly complete an adequate
12 amount (as determined by the Secretary)
13 of continuing education courses that meet
14 requirements determined by the Secretary
15 for content and the rigor of the material
16 covered by such courses. An individual
17 shall not serve as a member of a survey
18 team unless the individual is in compliance
19 with the requirements of this clause.”.

20 (b) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(g)(2)(E) of the Social
21 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(g)(2)(E)) is amended by
22 adding at the end the following:

23 “(iv) ADEQUATE QUALIFIED STAFF
24 FOR SURVEY TEAMS.—The Secretary, in
25 consultation with the advisory committee

1 under subparagraph (F), shall establish re-
2 quirements for the qualifications and com-
3 pensation of members of a survey team
4 under this subsection and require that a
5 State employs an adequate number of indi-
6 viduals as members of survey teams to en-
7 sure adequate oversight of skilled nursing
8 facilities.

9 “(v) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—In
10 addition to the training and testing pro-
11 gram required under clause (iii), the Sec-
12 retary shall require that State and Federal
13 surveyors regularly complete an adequate
14 amount (as determined by the Secretary)
15 of continuing education courses that meet
16 requirements determined by the Secretary
17 for content and the rigor of the material
18 covered by such courses. No individual
19 shall serve as a member of a survey team
20 unless the individual is in compliance with
21 the requirements of this clause.”.

22 **SEC. 4. ENSURING THE INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY**
23 **OF SURVEYORS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—

1 (1) MEDICARE.—Section 1819(g) of the Social
2 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(g)) is amended by
3 adding the following at the end:

4 “(6) REPORTING OF INACCURACIES.—

5 “(A) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—

6 For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘cov-
7 ered individual’ means an individual—

8 “(i) who is a member of a State sur-
9 vey team under this subsection; or

10 “(ii) who is an employee of the State
11 department or agency that conducts sur-
12 veys under this section.

13 “(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—A cov-
14 ered individual shall report to the Secretary any
15 instance in which the individual suspects that—

16 “(i) a survey under this subsection
17 fails to report or under reports an issue in
18 a facility that could impact the safety or
19 quality of care of the residents in such fa-
20 cility; or

21 “(ii) a member of the survey team or
22 an employee of the State survey agency
23 was inappropriately influenced (through
24 the offering of monetary awards or

1 through undue pressure) to alter the re-
2 sults of the survey.

3 “(C) RESPONSE TO REPORT.—If the Sec-
4 retary receives a report under subparagraph
5 (B), the Secretary shall take appropriate action,
6 as determined by the Secretary, to ensure the
7 accuracy of the survey.

8 “(D) PENALTIES FOR INAPPROPRIATELY
9 INFLUENCING A SURVEYOR.—Subject to sub-
10 paragraph (H), any individual (including an
11 employee of a skilled nursing facility or any af-
12 filiated corporate entity, a representative of the
13 skilled nursing facility industry, a member of a
14 State survey team, an employee of the State de-
15 partment or agency that conducts surveys
16 under this section, or an elected official) who
17 attempts to inappropriately influence (as de-
18 fined by the Secretary through regulations) the
19 results of a survey under this subsection, or the
20 actions of a member of a survey team or an em-
21 ployee of a survey agency, shall be subject to a
22 civil money penalty not to exceed \$10,000. The
23 provisions of section 1128A (other than sub-
24 sections (a) and (b)) shall apply to a civil
25 money penalty under the previous sentence in

1 the same manner as such provisions apply to a
2 penalty or proceeding under section 1128A(a).

3 “(E) WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—

4 With respect to a covered individual, any officer
5 or employee of the State may not—

6 “(i) discharge, demote, suspend,
7 threaten, harass, or deny a promotion or
8 other employment-related benefit to such
9 individual, or in any other manner dis-
10 criminate against an individual in the
11 terms and conditions of employment be-
12 cause the individual submitted a report
13 under subparagraph (B); or

14 “(ii) file a complaint or a report
15 against the individual with the appropriate
16 State professional disciplinary agency be-
17 cause the individual submitted a report
18 under subparagraph (B).

19 “(F) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATING WHIS-
20 TLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—Subject to sub-
21 paragraph (H), any officer or employee of a
22 State who engages in an activity that is prohib-
23 ited by subparagraph (E) shall be subject to a
24 civil money penalty not to exceed \$50,000. The
25 provisions of section 1128A (other than sub-

1 sections (a) and (b)) shall apply to a civil
2 money penalty under the previous sentence in
3 the same manner as such provisions apply to a
4 penalty or proceeding under section 1128A(a).

5 “(G) REQUIREMENT TO POST NOTICE.—

6 Each State shall post conspicuously in an ap-
7 propriate location a sign (in a form specified by
8 the Secretary) specifying the rights of covered
9 individuals under this section. Such sign shall
10 include—

11 “(i) a statement that a covered indi-
12 vidual may file a complaint with the Sec-
13 retary describing any violations of the pro-
14 visions of this paragraph by an employee
15 or officer of a State; and

16 “(ii) information concerning the form
17 and manner in which such a complaint
18 should be filed.

19 “(H) CONSTRUCTION RELATED TO LEGIS-
20 LATIVE OVERSIGHT.—For purposes of this
21 paragraph, to the extent that a member of a
22 State legislature requests that a covered indi-
23 vidual appear at a hearing of a committee of
24 such legislature or asks questions of such indi-
25 vidual during such a hearing, the actions of

1 such member shall not be construed in a man-
2 ner that would subject such member to a pen-
3 alty under this paragraph.”.

4 (2) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(g) of the Social
5 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(g)) is amended by
6 adding the following at the end:

7 “(6) REPORTING OF INACCURACIES.—

8 “(A) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—

9 For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘cov-
10 ered individual’ means an individual—

11 “(i) who is a member of a State sur-
12 vey team under this subsection; or

13 “(ii) who is an employee of the State
14 department or agency that conducts sur-
15 veys under this section.

16 “(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—A cov-
17 ered individual shall report to the Secretary any
18 instance in which the individual suspects that—

19 “(i) a survey under this subsection
20 fails to report or under reports an issue in
21 a facility that could impact the safety or
22 quality of care of the residents in such fa-
23 cility; or

24 “(ii) a member of the survey team or
25 an employee of the State survey agency

1 was inappropriately influenced (through
2 the offering of monetary awards or
3 through undue pressure) to alter the re-
4 sults of the survey.

5 “(C) RESPONSE TO REPORT.—If the Sec-
6 retary receives a report under subparagraph
7 (B), the Secretary shall take appropriate action,
8 as determined by the Secretary, to ensure the
9 accuracy of the survey.

10 “(D) PENALTIES FOR INAPPROPRIATELY
11 INFLUENCING A SURVEYOR.—Subject to sub-
12 paragraph (H), any individual (including an
13 employee of a skilled nursing facility or any af-
14 filiated corporate entity, a representative of the
15 skilled nursing facility industry, a member of a
16 State survey team, an employee of the State de-
17 partment or agency that conducts surveys
18 under this section, or an elected official) who
19 attempts to inappropriately influence (as de-
20 fined by the Secretary through regulations) the
21 results of a survey under this subsection, or the
22 actions of a member of a survey team or an em-
23 ployee of a survey agency, shall be subject to a
24 civil money penalty not to exceed \$10,000. The
25 provisions of section 1128A (other than sub-

1 sections (a) and (b)) shall apply to a civil
2 money penalty under the previous sentence in
3 the same manner as such provisions apply to a
4 penalty or proceeding under section 1128A(a).

5 “(E) WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—

6 With respect to a covered individual, any officer
7 or employee of the State may not—

8 “(i) discharge, demote, suspend,
9 threaten, harass, or deny a promotion or
10 other employment-related benefit to such
11 individual, or in any other manner dis-
12 criminate against an individual in the
13 terms and conditions of employment be-
14 cause the individual submitted a report
15 under subparagraph (B); or

16 “(ii) file a complaint or a report
17 against the individual with the appropriate
18 State professional disciplinary agency be-
19 cause the individual submitted a report
20 under subparagraph (B).

21 “(F) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATING WHIS-
22 TLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—Subject to sub-
23 paragraph (H), any officer or employee of a
24 State who engages in an activity that is prohib-
25 ited by subparagraph (E) shall be subject to a

1 civil money penalty not to exceed \$50,000. The
2 provisions of section 1128A (other than sub-
3 sections (a) and (b)) shall apply to a civil
4 money penalty under the previous sentence in
5 the same manner as such provisions apply to a
6 penalty or proceeding under section 1128A(a).

7 “(G) REQUIREMENT TO POST NOTICE.—

8 Each State shall post conspicuously in an ap-
9 propriate location a sign (in a form specified by
10 the Secretary) specifying the rights of covered
11 individuals under this section. Such sign shall
12 include—

13 “(i) a statement that a covered indi-
14 vidual may file a complaint with the Sec-
15 retary describing any violations of the pro-
16 visions of this paragraph by an employee
17 or officer of a State; and

18 “(ii) information concerning the form
19 and manner in which such a complaint
20 should be filed.

21 “(H) CONSTRUCTION RELATED TO LEGIS-
22 LATIVE OVERSIGHT.—For purposes of this
23 paragraph, to the extent that a member of a
24 State legislature requests that a covered indi-
25 vidual appear at a hearing of a committee of

1 such legislature or asks questions of such indi-
2 vidual during such a hearing, the actions of
3 such member shall not be construed in a man-
4 ner that would subject such member to a pen-
5 alty under this paragraph.”.

6 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

7 (1) Section 1819(f)(2)(B)(iii)(I)(c) of the Social
8 Security Act is amended by inserting “, a civil mone-
9 tary penalty described in section 1919(g)(6)(D) of
10 not less than \$10,000” after “of not less than
11 \$5,000”.

12 (2) Section 1919(f)(2)(B)(iii)(I)(c) of the Social
13 Security Act is amended by inserting “, a civil mone-
14 tary penalty described in (g)(6)(D) of not less than
15 \$10,000” after “of not less than \$5,000”.

16 **SEC. 5. ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

17 (a) MEDICARE.—Section 1819(g)(2) of the Social Se-
18 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(g)(2)) is amended by add-
19 ing at the end the following:

20 “(F) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

21 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary
22 shall establish an advisory committee on
23 surveys under this paragraph.

24 “(ii) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership
25 of the advisory committee under clause (i)

1 shall include advocates for residents of
2 skilled nursing facilities, members of sur-
3 vey teams under this subsection, and nurs-
4 ing home administrators.

5 “(iii) RECOMMENDED STANDARDS.—

6 The advisory committee under clause (i)
7 shall make recommendations to the Sec-
8 retary on standards for—

9 “(I) the adequate staffing of sur-
10 vey teams under this subsection;

11 “(II) the training of members of
12 such teams; and

13 “(III) disclosing any contact be-
14 tween such members and individuals
15 associated with skilled nursing facili-
16 ties, and limiting such contact to pre-
17 vent inappropriate influence of such
18 members by such individuals.

19 “(iv) OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.—

20 The advisory committee under clause (i)
21 may also make recommendations to the
22 Secretary on any other issue that would
23 improve the survey process under this
24 paragraph.”.

1 (b) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(g)(2) of the Social Se-
2 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(g)(2)) is amended by adding
3 at the end the following:

4 “(F) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

5 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary
6 shall establish an advisory committee on
7 surveys under this paragraph.

8 “(ii) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership
9 of the advisory committee under clause (i)
10 shall include advocates for residents of
11 nursing facilities, members of survey teams
12 under this subsection, and nursing home
13 administrators.

14 “(iii) RECOMMENDED STANDARDS.—
15 The advisory committee under clause (i)
16 shall make recommendations to the Sec-
17 retary on standards for—

18 “(I) the adequate staffing of sur-
19 vey teams under this subsection;

20 “(II) the training of members of
21 such teams; and

22 “(III) disclosing any contact be-
23 tween such members and individuals
24 associated with nursing facilities, and
25 limiting such contact to prevent inap-

1 appropriate influence of such members
2 by such individuals.

3 “(iv) OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.—
4 The advisory committee under clause (i)
5 may also make recommendations to the
6 Secretary on any other issue that would
7 improve the survey process under this
8 paragraph.”.

9 **SEC. 6. REVIEW OF SURVEYS.**

10 (a) MEDICARE.—Section 1819(g)(2)(D) of the Social
11 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(g)(2)(D)) is amended—

12 (1) by striking “Each State” and inserting the
13 following:

14 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Each State”; and

15 (2) by adding at the end the following new
16 clause:

17 “(ii) REVIEW OF SURVEYS.—The su-
18 pervisor of the survey team shall review
19 each survey conducted under this sub-
20 section to ensure that any issues that im-
21 pact quality of care that are identified by
22 such surveys are consistently and appro-
23 priately described and rated by the survey
24 team.”.

1 (b) MEDICAID.—Section 1919(g)(2)(D) of the Social
2 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(g)(2)(D)) is amended—

3 (1) by striking “Each State” and inserting the
4 following:

5 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Each State”; and

6 (2) by adding at the end the following new
7 clause:

8 “(ii) REVIEW OF SURVEYS.—The su-
9 pervisor of the survey team shall review
10 each survey conducted under this sub-
11 section to ensure that any issues that im-
12 pact quality of care that are identified by
13 such surveys are consistently and appro-
14 priately described and rated by the survey
15 team.”.

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