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A memorial to the Congress of the United States, urging Congress to enact a Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit.

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, comprehensive reform of the Medicare program would use the successful tools of the private sector in coordinating care for this population and use the marketplace to foster competition among private plans, resulting in more

1 choices of quality coverage for seniors and the disabled while
2 maintaining the financial sustainability of the program, and

3 WHEREAS, Congress's inaction has failed to provide for
4 comprehensive reform of Medicare, encouraging states to use
5 their own resources to ease the burden of their elderly and
6 disabled populations and effectively to assume an unfunded,
7 informal mandate, and

8 WHEREAS, in implementing state programs to assist the
9 Medicare population, state budgetary constraints can often
10 result in requirements to restrict and limit the patient's
11 access to needed prescription drugs, and enact anticompetitive
12 price controls, NOW, THEREFORE,

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14 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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16 That the Congress of the United States is urged to
17 enact financially sustainable, voluntary, universal, and
18 privately administered out-patient prescription drug coverage
19 as part of the federal Medicare program.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
22 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
23 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
24 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.

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