

DECEMBER 31, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 10284 - Medicare Amendments -- which amends the Medicare and Professional Standards Review Organization (PSRO) programs; authorizes States to modify procedures for issuing food stamps to welfare families; includes a tax rider relating to certain irrigation dams.

H. R. 10284 will make numerous amendments to the Medicare and PSRO programs. It also contains two amendments unrelated to health--one deals with the issuance of food stamps to families receiving welfare benefits and the other is a tax amendment relating to the exemption of interest on certain irrigation dam bonds.

H. R. 10284 will require physicians to receive Medicare reimbursements in fiscal year 1976 at a level not less than they received in 1975.

H. R. 10284 will repeal section 1962(c) of the Social Security Act which provides that, effective January 1, 1976, Medicare will not pay first for any medical service if the service is also covered under an FEHB plan and if the beneficiary has dual coverage.

This bill will correct a drafting error in Public Law 92-233 which unintentionally froze the premium for SMI, the voluntary medical insurance part of the Medicare program covering physicians' and certain other health services.

H. R. 10284 will require the Medicare trust fund to pay for the review of health care conducted by hospitals and those reviews conducted by PSROs directly.

H. R. 10284 will extend for three years--from January 1, 1976 to January 1, 1979--the current authority of the HEW Secretary to waive, for certain rural hospitals, Medicare's requirement that participating hospitals provide 24-hour service by a registered professional nurse.

H. R. 10284 will delay the implementation of the withholding of the food stamp purchase price from welfare payments and the distribution of the food stamp coupon allotment. This will be delayed until October 1, 1976. The bill will permit the American Falls Reservoir District in Idaho to issue tax-exempt bonds for the construction of a dam to replace the original American Falls Dam constructed in 1927 by the Bureau of Reclamation.

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