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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4038

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State of Washington                      59th Legislature                      2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Hinkle, Cody and Santos

Read first time 01/24/2006. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1            TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
2            AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3            REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4            UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5            We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
6            the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
7            represent and petition as follows:

8            WHEREAS, Diabetes is now widely recognized as one of the top public  
9            health threats facing our nation today and affects more than 18 million  
10           Americans. In 2002, diabetes accounted for 132 billion dollars in  
11           direct and indirect health care costs; and

12           WHEREAS, Diabetes now affects nearly 1.4 million Washington  
13           residents: Over 298,000 people in Washington have been diagnosed with  
14           diabetes; over 126,000 people have undiagnosed diabetes; and over  
15           963,000 people have prediabetes; and

16           WHEREAS, People who have diabetes need skills to manage their  
17           diabetes and skills to help them stay active in their lives. This  
18           training is central to diabetes prevention and care; and

19           WHEREAS, Chronic disease self-management programs have a proven

1 success rate, allowing persons with diabetes to better control their  
2 diabetes; and

3 WHEREAS, Persons living with diabetes who are properly trained with  
4 self-management skills are better able to prevent the deadly  
5 complications of diabetes, which can include heart disease, stroke,  
6 blindness, lower extremity amputation, and kidney failure; and

7 WHEREAS, Certified diabetes educators are highly trained  
8 multidisciplinary health care professionals dedicated to delivering  
9 quality diabetes self-management training; and

10 WHEREAS, Evidence has shown that access to a certified diabetes  
11 educator improves the management of diabetes, a chronic illness that  
12 requires a high level of maintenance; and

13 WHEREAS, Certified diabetes educators teach people with diabetes  
14 how to maintain the daily rigors of diet, exercise, meal planning,  
15 medication monitoring, healthy coping skills, and other factors  
16 necessary to control the disease; and

17 WHEREAS, Certified diabetes educators are also on the front line of  
18 the efforts to promote prevention of diabetes; and

19 WHEREAS, Congress recognized the value of diabetes self-management  
20 training when it began covering the benefit in the Balanced Budget Act  
21 of 1997. At that time, most certified diabetes educators worked in a  
22 hospital setting and were able to bill Medicare for their services  
23 through the hospital's provider number. Unfortunately, during these  
24 tough economic times, hospitals are closing their diabetes education  
25 programs at a rate of two to five per month. This leaves diabetes  
26 educators without an avenue to provide or bill for diabetes education -  
27 services which are desperately needed to keep up with the growing  
28 number of people diagnosed with diabetes each day; and

29 WHEREAS, Certified diabetes educators have received extensive  
30 training in diabetes management. They have met all criteria for  
31 initial certification, including a prerequisite qualifying professional  
32 credential in a specified health care profession, have professional  
33 practice experience in diabetes self-management training that includes  
34 one thousand hours of diabetes teaching, have passed a national  
35 examination offered by a certifying body recognized as entitled to  
36 grant certification to diabetes educators, and are required to renew  
37 the certification every five years;

1       NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully request that the  
2 United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate  
3 enact Senate Bill 626 and House Bill 3612, known as the "Diabetes Self-  
4 Management Training Act." The Act will increase access to diabetes  
5 care by adding certified diabetes educators to the current list of  
6 Medicare providers, thereby making certified diabetes educators  
7 billable providers.

8       BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
9 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United  
10 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the  
11 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of  
12 Washington.

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