Health Care & Wellness Committee

SJM 8013

Brief Description: Calling on Congress to enact legislation to eliminate the 24 month Medicare waiting period for participants in Social Security Disability Insurance.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Parlette, Pflug, Franklin, Marr, Murray, Shin, Haugen, Kline and Kohl-Welles.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests the President and members of Congress to eliminate the 24-month waiting period for Medicare enrollment for those individuals with an approved Social Security disability.

Hearing Date: 3/20/09

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146)

Background:

The federal Medicare program provides health insurance for individuals over age 65, some disabled people under age 65, and people of all ages with End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure treated with dialysis or a transplant). The Medicare system was originally administered by the Social Security Administration, but in 1977 management was transferred to the Health Care Financing Administration, which has since been renamed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The eligibility determination and enrollment processes are still linked with the federal Social Security Administration, who also determines whether individuals with a permanent disability are eligible for Social Security income. After the Social Security eligibility is established, individuals may enroll in Medicare insurance after they have completed a 24-month waiting period.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Senate Joint Memorial requests that the President and members of Congress eliminate the 24-month waiting period for Medicare enrollment for those individuals with an approved Social Security disability.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.