

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

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By: **Senators Kelley, Augustine, Feldman, Hayes, Hershey, Lam, and Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2020

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 29, 2020

RESOLUTION NO. _____

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Congressional Action – Surprise Billing – Air Ambulance**

3 FOR the purpose of urging the U.S. Congress to pass legislation that prohibits the balance
4 billing of consumers by certain air ambulances; providing that a copy of this
5 resolution be sent by the Department of Legislative Services to certain individuals;
6 and generally relating to balance billing of consumers by air ambulances.

7 WHEREAS, A 2019 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office stated that
8 approximately two-thirds of air ambulance transports were out-of-network in 2017; and

9 WHEREAS, The same report stated that such out-of-network transports may result
10 in the balance billing of a consumer for charges not covered by the consumer's insurance
11 carrier; and

12 WHEREAS, Maryland consumers are at risk of being balance billed by
13 out-of-network air ambulances; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2019, the Health Care Cost Institute reported that the average price
15 of an air ambulance trip increased substantially from 2008 to 2017, rising 144% (from
16 \$11,414 in 2008 to \$27,894 in 2017) for helicopters and 166% (from \$15,684 in 2008 to
17 \$41,674 in 2017) for airplanes; and

18 WHEREAS, The cost of the balance bills can be catastrophic to the finances of
19 individuals and families; and

20 WHEREAS, The federal 1978 Airline Deregulation Act preempts state-level
21 economic regulation of air carriers, which includes air ambulances; and

EXPLANATION:

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken by amendment.



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1 WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Maryland is unable to protect Maryland
2 consumers from balance billing by air ambulances; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General
4 Assembly of Maryland urges the U.S. Congress to pass legislation that prohibits the
5 balance billing of consumers by air ambulances that do not participate in a consumer's
6 insurance carrier network; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
8 Legislative Services to:

9 (1) the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the
10 Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the
11 Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and

12 (2) the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Benjamin L. Cardin
13 and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and
14 Representatives Andrew P. Harris, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger III, John P. Sarbanes,
15 Anthony G. Brown, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, David J. Trone, ~~Elijah E. Cummings~~ the
16 Representative from the seventh Congressional District, and Jamie Raskin, House Office
17 Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Approved:

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.