

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners, held at the Chippewa County Courthouse, 319 Court St., Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan on the 10th day of April, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Scott Shackleton, Don McLean, Jim Martin, Conor Egan and Bobby Savoie

ABSENT: None

The following preamble and resolution was offered by Commissioner McLean and seconded by Commissioner Martin.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-09
RESOLUTION TO REVISE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL OF 2003

WHEREAS, health care costs continue to rise for all Americans and, for some Americans, this increase can be devastating; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is the focus of many lawmakers who portray it as an “entitlement” program that costs the Treasury too much money. Technically, the term “Entitlement” is correct but it has an unfortunate connotation; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is an essential medical plan that millions of seniors and disabled individuals depend upon to stay alive. Medicare is not a gift, as the term “entitlement” suggests. Many of the beneficiaries have worked their entire adult life and paid into the system in order to receive this crucial medical plan; and

WHEREAS, due to spiraling costs largely associated with the price of prescription medications, our elected officials find themselves passing on increased costs to those who can least afford that increase, namely senior citizens and disabled individuals who are on Medicare’s Part D Drug Program; and

WHEREAS, when congress enacted Medicare Prescription Drug Bill they enacted a law that does not allow Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for drug prices the way Medicaid and the Veterans Administration does; and

WHEREAS, one economist, Dean Baker, estimates that Medicare could have saved approximately \$332 billion dollars between 2006 and 2013 (approximately \$50 billion a year) had the Department of Health and Human Services been permitted to negotiate prices of drugs with the drug companies, as federal agencies do in other programs; and

WHEREAS, rising prescription drug costs have been the primary reason for the increase in health benefit costs; and

WHEREAS, the increasing cost of prescription drugs and outrageous profits made by pharmaceutical companies is a systemic problem that significantly affects our state and our nation. It deserves non-partisan effort; and

WHEREAS, we must prevent our elected officials from balancing the budget on the backs of those who can least afford it, the elderly and disabled. Increases in premiums and drug costs are unacceptable ways to deal with a flawed Medicare Prescription Drug Bill; and

WHEREAS, we must preserve the Medicare program as is currently exists and to do so requires immediate action to cut unnecessary costs, particular in the area of prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, we must revise the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper, drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, we cannot allow the previously approved bill to stand as adopted at the risk of having the Medicare program be the cause of a staggeringly increasing deficit which will require tax increases or cuts to the rest of the government, nor can we allow the continuance of price increases to our citizens, which may cause many to contemplate discontinuing medically necessary drugs in order to pay their bills, heat their homes and have food on the table.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners goes on record urging our legislators to immediately commence the process of revising the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to our area Federal and State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, the Michigan Association of Counties and the other Michigan Counties.

A VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS


AYES: Scott Shackleton, Don McLean, Jim Martin, Conor Egan and Bobby Savoie

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.



Scott Shackleton, Chairman, Chippewa County Board of Commissioners



Catherine C. Maleport, County Clerk

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss.
COUNTY OF CHIPPEWA)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the resolution adopted by the County Board of Commissioners of Chippewa County at a regular meeting held on the date first stated above, and I further certify that public notice of such meeting was given as provided by law.



Catherine C. Maleport, County Clerk