

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1657

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to facilitate the transition to Medicare for individuals enrolled in group health plans, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 8, 2019

Mr. SMUCKER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to facilitate the transition to Medicare for individuals enrolled in group health plans, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Seniors’ Health Care  
5 Choice Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. FACILITATING TRANSITION TO MEDICARE FOR IN-**  
2 **DIVIDUALS ENROLLED IN GROUP HEALTH**  
3 **PLANS.**

4 (a) SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD FOR INDIVID-  
5 UALS ENROLLED IN COBRA CONTINUATION COV-  
6 ERAGE.—Section 1837(i) of the Social Security Act (42  
7 U.S.C. 1395p(i)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
8 lowing new paragraph:

9 “(5)(A) In the case of an individual who—

10 “(i) at the time the individual first satisfies  
11 paragraph (1) or (2) of section 1836, is enrolled in  
12 COBRA continuation coverage (as defined in sub-  
13 paragraph (D)); and

14 “(ii) has elected not to enroll (or to be deemed  
15 enrolled) under this section during the individual’s  
16 initial enrollment period,

17 there shall be a special enrollment period described in sub-  
18 paragraph (B).

19 “(B) The special enrollment period referred to in sub-  
20 paragraph (A) is the period that includes each month dur-  
21 ing any part of which the individual is enrolled in COBRA  
22 continuation coverage.

23 “(C) An individual may only enroll during the special  
24 enrollment period provided under subparagraph (B) one  
25 time during the individual’s lifetime.

1 “(D) For purposes of this paragraph, the term  
2 ‘COBRA continuation coverage’ means continuation cov-  
3 erage—

4 “(i) under a COBRA continuation provision (as  
5 defined in section 2791(d)(4) of the Public Health  
6 Service Act);

7 “(ii) pursuant to section 8905a of title 5,  
8 United States Code; or

9 “(iii) under a similar State program.”.

10 (b) COVERAGE PERIOD FOR INDIVIDUALS  
11 TRANSITIONING FROM COBRA CONTINUATION COV-  
12 ERAGE.—Section 1838(e) of the Social Security Act (42  
13 U.S.C. 1395q(e)) is amended—

14 (1) by striking “pursuant to section 1837(i)(3)  
15 or 1837(i)(4)(B)” and inserting the following: “pur-  
16 suant to—

17 “(1) section 1837(i)(3) or 1837(i)(4)(B)—”;

18 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as  
19 subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and mov-  
20 ing the indentation of each such subparagraph 2  
21 ems to the right;

22 (3) by striking the period at the end of the sub-  
23 paragraph (B), as so redesignated, and inserting “;  
24 or”; and

1           (4) by adding at the end the following new  
2 paragraph:

3           “(2) section 1837(i)(5), the coverage period  
4 shall begin on the first day of the month following  
5 the month in which the individual so enrolls.”.

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