

available product in the nongroup market, under § 15-606 of the Insurance Article and the regulations of the Commission, as those rates were in effect on January 1, 2000, until the later of the termination of the Short-Term Prescription Drug Subsidy Plan created under this Act or the end of June 30, 2002.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene shall study the cost of providing access to managed care for Medicare Plus Choice-eligible individuals residing in urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the State and shall report the results of the study to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly, on or before January 1, 2001.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That if the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is notified by the federal Health Care Financing Administration that any provision of the Short-Term Prescription Drug Subsidy Plan or of this Act will invalidate the Maryland Medicare Waiver or cause a reduction in the State's eligibility for federal funding of Medicaid, the Secretary may suspend the provision of the Short-Term Prescription Drug Subsidy Plan or the provision of this Act that is the subject of the notification.

SECTION 2. 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2000. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at On the earlier of the end of June 30, 2002, or the availability of comparable prescription pharmacy benefits provided by Medicare under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, as amended, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect. If comparable prescription pharmacy benefits are provided by Medicare under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene shall notify the Department of Legislative Services, 90 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401 not later than 90 days before prescription drug benefits are to be provided.

Approved May 18, 2000.

CHAPTER 566

(Senate Bill 869)

AN ACT concerning

Judith P. Hoyer Blue Ribbon Commission on the Financing of Early Child Care and Education

FOR the purpose of creating the Judith P. Hoyer Blue Ribbon Commission on the Financing of Early Child Care and Education; providing for the purpose, duties, and membership of the Commission; providing for the terms and compensation of its members; providing for the appointment of its members; requiring the Commission to meet at certain times and issue reports on or before certain dates; providing for the termination of the Commission and the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the creation of a Commission charged with