"We mark the festival of Christmas, which is the most sacred and hopeful day in our civilization. For nearly 2,000 years, the message of Christmas, the message of peace and goodwill towards all men, has been the guiding star of our endeavors.

"I had a meeting which included some of our representatives from far-off countries in Africa and Asia. They were returning to their posts for the Christmas holidays.

□ 1100

"Talking with them afterwards, I was struck by the fact that in the far off continents Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, as well as Christians, paused from their labors on the 25th day of December to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace. There could be no more striking proof that Christmas is truly the universal holiday of all men. It is the day when all of us dedicate our thoughts to others; when all are reminded that mercy and compassion are the enduring virtues; when all show, by small deeds and large and by acts, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

"It is the day when we remind ourselves that man can and must live in peace with his neighbors and that it is the peacemakers who are truly blessed. In this year of 1962 we greet each other at Christmas with some special sense of the blessings of peace. This has been a year of peril when the peace has been sorely threatened. But it has been a year when peril was faced and when reason ruled. As a result, we may talk, at this Christmas, just a little bit more confidently of peace on Earth, good will to men. As a result, the hopes of the American people are perhaps a little higher. We have much yet to do. We still need to ask that God bless everyone."

Of course, each President has made pronouncements of a similar nature various times.

This was Jimmy Carter, President Carter, December 15, 1977, at what he described as the Christmas Pageant of Peace Ceremony on the White House Ellipse:

"Christmas has a special meaning for those of us who are Christians, those of us who believe in Christ, those of us who know that almost 2,000 years ago, the Son of Peace was born to give us a vision of perfection, a vision of humility, a vision of unselfishness, a vision of compassion, a vision of love."

President Carter in 1978 said:

"Rosalyn and I send our warmest wishes to our fellow citizens who celebrate the birth of Christ and who rejoice with us in the coming of the peace He symbolizes.

"We welcome this opportunity to offer our thanks to those who have given us their encouragement and prayers.

"We also join in this season's traditional expression of appreciation to God for His blessings in the past year, and we ask for His continuing guidance and protection as we face the challenges of 1979."

President George W. Bush, President Clinton, President George W. Bush, and President Obama have delivered Christmas messages, and President Obama his holiday messages.

I would like to conclude at this time with President Reagan's message, as he says on the observance of Christmas, December 19, 1988, his last Christmas message as President:

"The themes of Christmas and of coming home for the holidays have long been intertwined in song and story. There is a profound irony and lesson in this, because Christmas celebrates the coming of a savior who was born without a home.

"There was no room at the inn for the Holy Family. Weary of travel, a young Mary close to childbirth and her carpenter husband Joseph found but the rude shelter of a stable. There was born the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace—an event on which all history would turn. Jesus would again be without a home, and more than once; on the flight to Egypt and during His public ministry, when he said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.'

"From His very infancy, on, our Redeemer was reminding us that from then on we would never lack a home in Him. Like the shepherds whom the angel of the Lord appeared on the first Christmas Day, we could always say: 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us.'

"As we come home with gladness to family and friends this Christmas, let us also remember our neighbors who cannot go home themselves. Our compassion and concern this Christmas and all year long will mean much to the hospitalized, the homeless, the convalescent, the orphaned—and will surely lead us on our way to the joy and peace of Bethlehem and the Christ child who bids us come. For it is only in finding and living the internal meaning of the nativity that we can be truly happy, truly at peace, truly home."

He concludes, as I will—President Reagan:

"Merry Christmas, and God bless you."

I yield back the balance of my time.

PAYING DOWN THE DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) for 30 minutes.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. I thank the Speaker for the recognition and the opportunity to address the House on this the final hour of the final day of the final week of the final month of this year in Congress.

It has been a remarkable year. The Congress—the House especially—has seen some remarkable changes. I would like to share with you a little perspective on where we find ourselves now from a budgetary standpoint.

For the last year, I have had the privilege of chairing the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives. That is the committee that deals with all of the spending that occurs in our Nation from the Federal Government standpoint.

I would like to start by saying: What is it defining the goal that we have at the Budget Committee and in the Republican Conference here in the House of Representatives?

That goal is broadly to create the greatest amount of opportunity and the greatest amount of success for the greatest number of people so that the greatest number of American Dreams can be realized in a fair and a compassionate system.

That is kind of the 60,000-foot view that we have here in the House of Representatives at the Budget Committee among Republicans who have allowed me the privilege of chairing the Budget Committee.

So from that point of view, in terms of the perspective of where we find ourselves and what our goal is, what does that have to do with the budget? What does that have to do with the numbers that get crunched in this town all the time and that we just finished a remarkable week talking about how to get the progrowth policies that are so necessary to get our economy growing and how do we move forward from a spending standpoint?

Folks all across the country have differing views about how that ought to be done. But I think it is helpful to kind of step back and to look at the overall picture, the big picture.

From a spending standpoint, the Nation understands and appreciates that Washington spends a lot. $3.8 trillion is the amount of money that your Federal Government will spend in this fiscal year. That is 3.8 with too many zeros after it. It is hard to get your arms around the amount of money that that is. But it is important for all Americans to appreciate kind of how that breaks down.

The point I want to begin with is this point about mandatory spending and discretionary spending. Folks tend to think mostly, if they don't know how Washington works, that this $3.8 trillion is the money that Congress deals with every single year. Right? It is the spending that goes out the door here in Washington every single year and that continues to grow and grow and grow. We will go over some of those numbers.

The fact of the matter is that this spending is broken down into two major categories. One is called mandatory. I prefer the word automatic because it really isn't mandatory. That is the spending that has occurred and continues to occur because Congress, along with the President, at some point in the past has defined a certain amount of spending or certain programs that need to be continued year after year after year, regardless of what Congress does or until and unless Congress changes those programs. These are programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. There are a lot of other mandatory programs. These are important programs. There is no doubt about it.

The money that goes to those programs goes to them based upon an individual in this country qualifying for those programs based upon either their income or their age or some other circumstance. The amount of money to be spent on those programs doesn't change at all unless the House, the Senate, and the President agree to change it.

That is the mandatory side or the automatic side. I prefer, again, to call it automatic because it is automatic spending that occurs. It is only mandatory in that Congress in the past decided that that is what ought to be done. It doesn't bind us to it, but we have to come to some agreement, as a Congress and President, the legislative and the executive branch, in order to change that.

When you look at this chart here, what we see is that the mandatory programs—or the mandatory spending, automatic spending, is in red. All other spending, which is the discretionary spending, is in blue. This is 1965, 2014, and 2040, the three different pie charts.

We see that, in 1965, 50 years ago, the amount of mandatory spending—that is the automatic spending that occurs year after year after year unless Congress and the President agree to change something—the amount of mandatory spending as a percent of spending was about a third. About a third of all spending for the Federal Government 50 years ago was mandatory spending. So two-thirds was discretionary.

Now, what is discretionary spending? If you think about all of the spending that occurs in Washington, everything that occurs in Washington that people like and want and desire, some people want to change some of it and some people want to raise some things and lower other things.

But if you think about everything that Washington does with the exception of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and some other more minor mandatory programs—those are the ones on the automatic side—if you think about what Washington does, all of the rest of that is the blue that is the discretionary spending.

What is that? You can just march through the agencies of the Federal Government and define what those are. It is transportation. It is commerce. It is justice. It is the court system. It is roads. It is highways. It is infrastructure. It is education. It is energy. It is all of the things. It is defense. It is a remarkable amount and needed amount that we spend in the defense arena. All of those things—all of those things—are the discretionary money.

□ 1115

That is the blue on this graph. Remember that, in 1965—50 years ago—that was two-thirds of the Federal budget.

Now fast forward to 2014. They are, essentially, the same numbers as today; although, the blue has decreased a little more. The mandatory side, the automatic side, is now two-thirds—not one-third but two-thirds—of the spending that comes out of the Federal Government, which means those programs have continued to grow. Again, those are important programs—Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—and we will address the challenges that they have in a moment.

The spending there has grown to two-thirds of Federal spending, which means that the blue portion, the discretionary portion—that portion that people think about when they think about what the Federal Government spends money on, which is, again, defense and infrastructure and education and energy and all of the things that the Federal Government does—has been squeezed, if you will, to one-third of overall spending at the Federal level.

What does that mean? That is the genesis. Is this important to anybody out there across this great land?

It is the genesis for the battles that we have had on the level of spending for defense—yes—or for highways or for infrastructure or for education or for anything that we debate and discuss so as to try our best to represent the American people in a positive way about what kind of money and the number of resources—hardworking taxpayer money—ought to go for those programs. That money is getting decreased.

The Federal Government's challenge is to be able to figure out how to turn this around because, in a few short years, the mandatory side will be three-quarters of the spending out of Washington, which means that that discretionary part—that part that people count on to try to grow the economy and make it so that, again, the greatest number of American dreams can be realized by the greatest number of folks in a fair and a compassionate system—will get further and further and further diminished. So there is the challenge that we have, and the difficulty is getting folks to address the mandatory side.

Now, someone might say: Well, those programs are important. And they are. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—those programs—are important. So why not just leave them as they are? People are doing just fine. They think things are rolling along relatively well. Why not just leave them where they are?

Here is the dirty little secret about those programs: They are all going broke. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—all of them—are running out of resources over a period of time.

What does that mean? That means that the promises that the Federal Government has made—to seniors regarding health care, to individuals who take utilization of the Medicaid system, to seniors who have access to Social Security resources to try to make it so that their retirement years are more secure—will not be there. All of those benefits to those individuals that the Nation has promised to them will not be there. They will not be there at the level that has been promised.

You get some folks who say: Well, the length of time that it will take for us to have any real challenge in that arena is just too long. You don't have to worry about it. We have got more than enough time to take care of it.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it is right around the corner. From Social Security's standpoint, the disability program was destined to become insolvent next year. What did we do recently? We plugged the hole. We didn't solve the problem. We plugged the hole, but that doesn't make it so that it is any less likely that it will be a greater problem as the years go on.

Medicare. As a physician, I can tell you that the Medicare system is incredibly important to seniors across this great land. The Medicare system will run out of resources in 2030 to cover the services that have been promised. That is 14, 15 short years away.

When you think that 15 years is too far in the future, just think about the challenge that we had during Y2K, when the millennium turned over. That was just 15 years ago. Most folks remember that. Most folks remember the challenge that we had during that period of time. The fact of the matter is that 15 years is not a long time; so Medicare's going broke in 15 years is something that we ought not ignore.

Social Security. When does Social Security go broke? In 2034, which is 4 years after that—a very short period of time. Again, what does it mean if Social Security goes broke? It means that the benefits that have been assured and promised by your Federal Government are not going to be able to be provided to seniors. We think that is wrong. We think that is reckless and immoral to not do anything to fix that. We think it is important to save and strengthen and secure Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

You ask: What does that have to do with the budget? That gets us to what the Budget Committee did this past year, and I can't tell you how proud I am of the work that was done on behalf of the Republican majority here in this House of Representatives.

What did we do? We put in place, adopted a budget that would solve the challenges that we have in a way that gets us to a balanced budget, that gets us on a path to paying off the debt, that puts us on a path to solving, saving, strengthening, and securing Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, and that defines what the role of the Federal Government ought to be for all of the discretionary programs in that blue area.

Where does the spending occur from the Federal Government level? This is a pie chart that defines, again, the mandatory side and the discretionary side of our spending. Remember, about two-thirds of spending at the Federal level is the automatic side. What are those programs? It includes Social Security.

In 2014, which is the last full year that we had full numbers, there was $845 billion for Social Security. Medicare: $505 billion for Medicare. Medicaid: $301 billion for Medicaid. Other mandatory programs—which are the others that I have talked about, which are things like food stamps and the like—are at $448 billion. Interest on the debt, which is this one, is about $221 billion.

Let's talk about interest on the debt for a moment. This is money that is spent to cover the interest on the debt that we already have. The United States has a debt of about $18.2 trillion; so the interest that we pay on that annually now is about $221 billion. It is destined to increase enormously over the next few years, and that has huge consequences, again, on trying to find the greatest amount of opportunity and the greatest amount of success for the greatest number of folks so that the greatest number of American dreams may be realized.

How much is it going to increase? This is looking at just 10 years. The amount of interest—and that is if interest rates stay relatively reasonable—on the national debt, on the Federal debt, will be $800 billion. It will be close to $1 trillion that is going to be spent just on interest. That is more than on defense. That is more than on Medicaid. That is more than on Medicare. That is more than on education. That is more than on transportation. That is more than on science and space and technology.

Again, all of those things that the American people say that they want and desire are going to be crowded because of the mandatory spending—the automatic spending, yes—but the interest on the debt is approaching $1 trillion a year.

Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do on the Budget Committee is to say to our colleagues and to say to the American people that that is an irresponsible use of hard-earned taxpayer dollars to have that level of debt. It means that $1 trillion a year of that hard-earned money by the American people, who send it to Washington and expect that it is going to be used in a responsible way, is going to go toward interest on the debt. That doesn't do a thing to send a kid to college, to buy a house, to pay the rent, to start a business. Any of the kinds of things, again, that the American people say they want are harmed by that level of spending on interest on the national debt. That is why this is so important.

These numbers mean that the amount of opportunity and the amount of growth in our economy that will be available to make it so that those American dreams can be realized get lessened, and that is why it is so imperative that we address the challenges that we have from an economic standpoint.

Some people would say: Well, that really isn't a problem. All we need to do is to raise taxes—right?—to take more money from the American people. That is how you solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the level of revenue—the amount of money—coming into the Federal Government now is at its greatest point ever in real dollars. There is more money being sent to Washington by the American people and by businesses and folks all across this great land to fund the government—more money than ever—than in the history of our society. That is a phenomenal statement because what that means is that, if one believes that one just ought to raise taxes on people and take more hard-earned money, then what is the limit? What is the goal?

Our goal, again, is to create the greatest amount of opportunity for the greatest number of individuals and to create the greatest amount of success so that the greatest number of American dreams can be realized in a fair and a compassionate system. That is our goal. We don't believe that that goal is furthered by taking more money from hard-earned American taxpayers.

The challenge is how you solve that. How do you make it so that you don't get to a point at which $1 trillion a year is going to cover interest on the Federal debt?

Here is a depiction of how that is solved. This is what I call the smile chart. You can see the smile. The fact, however, is that the smile is the blue line there and not the red line. This axis here is the level of debt held as a percent of the gross domestic product. On the lower axis, on the X axis, it goes from 1940 to 2040. Then the dark color here is the graph of what level of debt we had as a Nation from 1940, which was at the beginning of World War II, until now. You see that it goes up and down.

The largest amount of debt that we had in this area was just after World War II, which was when we covered the expenses for the war. It tended to tamp down, and it got into the 20 to 30 percent range of the gross domestic product. That is kind of the range at which economists tell you is the sweet spot for how you get the economy growing and rolling and expanding and creating jobs and opportunities.

You see over there, just after 2010, the incredible increase. That was this President and the Federal Government's response to the economic challenge that we had. What did they do? They printed a lot of money and increased the amount of debt—a huge increase in the amount of debt.

Now, the red line is where their projections go. It is where the President and his party's projections go with current programs. Again, those are the programs that we have discussed. That is where their line goes on debt, which expands incredibly. We don't get to that point on that line because the economy won't tolerate that. It won't accommodate that in a way that makes it so that people are going to be able to even find a job, because you can't take that much money out of the economy and expect the economy to work.

□ 1130

So what we did was put in place our budget, adopt a budget, along with the Senate, that is the blue line. And that means that what we would do is figure out how to solve these challenges, get us on a path to paying off the debt.

You have got to have a surplus before you can begin to pay off the debt. But we have got to get on that path to paying off the debt so that we aren't utilizing the incredibly hard-earned taxpayer money simply for the kind of things that don't benefit anybody at all; and that is, interest on the debt. You cannot continue to have this level of spending.

We are incredibly excited about the opportunities that we have. We have got a lot of challenges in terms of having our colleagues come onboard and the American people recognizing that these problems are real and they are real right now.

We began a program in the Committee on the Budget called Restoring the Trust for All Generations. Mr. Speaker, if you had an interest, you could go to our Web site at www.budget.house.gov and look up the program that we have, Restoring the Trust for All Generations, an effort to try to build the critical mass of individuals necessary to say: Yes, we want that greatest amount of opportunity and success for folks so that American Dreams can be realized in a fair and compassionate system.

We recognize that in order for that to occur, we simply must address the mandatory, the automatic spending issues that are so challenging for us. In order to do that, we have got to make certain that we save and strengthen and secure Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other mandatory programs in a way that makes sense to the American people and put us on a path to being able to solve these challenges.

I am extremely excited about the opportunities available to us. I am frustrated that we haven't been able to get to them sooner than now. But I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that your Committee on the Budget and the individuals on that committee and the individuals in this Conference, I believe, recognize the challenges that we have and are looking forward, with great anticipation, to 2016, to the leadership from Speaker RYAN and the admonition that he has provided for us to say: Look, we have got to make certain that we define what the legislation is that solves and saves and strengthens and secures these programs. We have got to get ourselves on that path to make it so that we can get to a point where we have, indeed, balanced the budget without raising taxes and get ourselves on a path to paying off the debt.

If we are able to do that, Mr. Speaker, then we will, in fact, be able to stand proudly before the American people and say: What we have done is provided that amount of opportunity and that amount of success for the vast number of the American people so that American Dreams can be realized.

Mr. Speaker, I wish all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to that new year, again, with great anticipation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 515. An act to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 227. An act to strengthen the Federal education research system to make research and evaluations more timely and relevant to State and local needs in order to increase student achievement.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

DECEMBER 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House,
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), amended by the Division P of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (22 U.S.C. 6901), I am pleased to reappoint the following individuals to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Ms. Carolyn Bartholomew, Washington, DC.

Mr. Jeffrey L. Fiedler, Great Falls, VA.

Thank you for your attention to these appointments.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 34 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1300

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER) at 1 p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 18, 2015 at 12:34 p.m.:

That the Senate concur in the House amendments to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2029.

That the Senate passed S. 2425.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1321.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PATIENT ACCESS AND MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 2425) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve payments for complex rehabilitation technology and certain radiation therapy services, to ensure flexibility in applying the hardship exception for meaningful use for the 2015 EHR reporting period for 2017 payment adjustments, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2425

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. NON-APPLICATION OF MEDICARE FEE SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSORIES AND SEAT AND BACK CUSHIONS WHEN FURNISHED IN CONNECTION WITH COMPLEX REHABILITATIVE POWER WHEELCHAIRS.

(a) NON-APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall not, prior to January 1, 2017, use information on the payment determined under the competitive acquisition programs under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3) to adjust the payment amount that would otherwise be recognized under section 1834(a)(1)(B)(ii) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(a)(1)(B)(ii)) for wheelchair accessories (including seating systems) and seat and back cushions when furnished in connection with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may implement this subsection by program instruction or otherwise.

(b) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on wheelchair accessories (including seating systems) and seat and back cushions furnished in connection with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs. Such study shall include an analysis of the following with respect to such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions in each of the groups described in clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (B):

(i) The item descriptions and associated HCPCS codes for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions.

(ii) A breakdown of utilization and expenditures for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

(iii) A comparison of the payment amount under the competitive acquisition program under section 1847 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3) with the payment amount that would otherwise be recognized under section 1834 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m), including beneficiary cost sharing, for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions.

(iv) The aggregate distribution of such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished under such title XVIII within each of the groups described in subparagraph (B).

(v) Other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(B) GROUPS DESCRIBED.—The following groups are described in this subparagraph:

(i) Wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished predominantly with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs.

(ii) Wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished predominantly with power wheelchairs that are not described in clause (i).

(iii) Other wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished with either power wheelchairs described in clause (i) or (ii).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than June 1, 2016, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL PAYMENT RULES FOR CERTAIN RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES UNDER THE MEDICARE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–4) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(11) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES.—The code definitions, the work relative value units under subsection (c)(2)(C)(i), and the direct inputs for