

SEC. 146. IMPROVED ACCESS TO AMBULANCE SERVICES.

(a) **EXTENSION OF INCREASED MEDICARE PAYMENTS FOR GROUND AMBULANCE SERVICES.**—Section 1834(l)(13) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(l)(13)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “and for such services furnished on or after July 1, 2008, and before January 1, 2010” after “2007,”;

(B) in clause (i), by inserting “(or 3 percent if such service is furnished on or after July 1, 2008, and before January 1, 2010)” after “2 percent”; and

(C) in clause (ii), by inserting “(or 2 percent if such service is furnished on or after July 1, 2008, and before January 1, 2010)” after “1 percent”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “2006” and inserting “APPLICABLE PERIOD”; and

(B) by inserting “applicable” before “period”.

(b) **AIR AMBULANCE PAYMENT IMPROVEMENTS.**—

(1) **TREATMENT OF CERTAIN AREAS FOR PAYMENT FOR AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES UNDER THE AMBULANCE FEE SCHEDULE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for purposes of making payments under section 1834(l) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(l)) for air ambulance services furnished during the period beginning on July 1, 2008, and ending on December 31, 2009, any area that was designated as a rural area for purposes of making payments under such section for air ambulance services furnished on December 31, 2006, shall be treated as a rural area for purposes of making payments under such section for air ambulance services furnished during such period.

(2) **CLARIFICATION REGARDING SATISFACTION OF REQUIREMENT OF MEDICALLY NECESSARY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1834(l)(14)(B)(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(l)(14)(B)(i)) is amended by striking “reasonably determines or certifies” and inserting “certifies or reasonably determines”.

(B) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subparagraph (A) shall apply to services furnished on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 147. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF THE MEDICARE HOLD HARMLESS PROVISION UNDER THE PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT (HOPD) SERVICES FOR CERTAIN HOSPITALS.

Section 1833(t)(7)(D)(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(t)(7)(D)(i)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (II)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking “2009” and inserting “2010”; and

(B) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following new sentence: “For purposes of the preceding sentence, the applicable percentage shall be 95 percent with respect to covered OPD services furnished in 2006, 90 percent with respect to such services furnished in 2007, and 85 percent with respect to such services furnished in 2008 or 2009.”; and