Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.

www.medicareadvocacy.org

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CENTER FOR MEDICARE ADVOCACY SUPPORTS AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA

The Center for Medicare Advocacy supports the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962) and the accompanying Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act (H.R. 3961). These two pieces of legislation go far in promoting and ensuring for all Americans the peace of mind that was brought to older people and their families with the passage of Medicare in 1965.

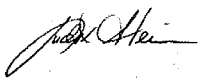
Medicare itself is based on the notion of shared undertaking, of pooling resources for the common good; in its case, the common good of older people and people with disabilities and their families. The Affordable Health Care for America Act applies that principle to all Americans by expanding access to health care to America's uninsured and implementing nationwide private market insurance reforms.

Important and valuable elements of these two pieces of legislation, H.R. 3961 and H.R. 3962, will:

- Provide affordable health insurance options for those currently without it;
- Prevent insurance companies from denying coverage to those with a pre-existing condition or dropping coverage of those who get sick;
- Prohibit insurance companies from having life-time limits on benefits;
- Ensure that insurance companies offer real value for premiums paid;
- Strengthen Medicare for the more than 40 million older people and people with disabilities who currently use the program and for future generations of beneficiaries;
- Improve Medicare's payment to doctors and thus ensure that Medicare beneficiaries can continue, as they do now, to see the doctor of their choice or find a doctor if they need one;
- Require Medicare, as well as private insurance, to provide preventive benefits without application of cost-sharing;
- Promote care coordination in Medicare – especially important for those with multiple chronic conditions – through various demonstrations and pilot projects;
- Improve access to Medicare-covered services for low-income beneficiaries by strengthening the programs that serve those individuals in myriad ways;
- Lower drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries by closing the Medicare Part D "doughnut hole" and allowing the government to negotiate with drug makers for lower drug prices;
- Provide benefits to help older people and people with disabilities live in their own homes and communities by establishing the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) program.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy applauds Speaker Pelosi and all members of the House of Representatives who have worked so very hard to bring this legislation to life.

Judith Stein



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