

Health Care Legislative Monitor

Congressman Jim Nussle

Manchester, Iowa

Summer 2006

Jim Nussle's Agenda ...

*Expand Iowa's
Economy to Create
Jobs*

*Improve Iowa
Education and
Expect Better Results*

*Access to Quality
Health Care for
All Iowans*

*Secure Our Nation
and Support Our
Troops*

*Strengthen Iowa's
Agriculture and En-
courage Fair Trade*

*Responsible Budgets
and Common-Sense
Taxation*

*Promote Iowa as an
Energy State*

*Retirement Security
for All Iowans*

*Honor Promises
Made to Iowa's Vet-
erans*

Nussle Agenda to Ensure Access to Quality Health Care for All Iowans

"I will work to put important health care decisions back into the hands of patients and their health providers. We should promote solutions to enhance Iowans' access to care such as health savings accounts. Health care costs can be reduced by eliminating expensive lawsuit abuse and by emphasizing preventative medicine. We must also make sure Iowans are treated fairly by Medicare and other health care programs. Recruiting and retaining high quality health providers into rural and underserved areas is another challenge that cannot be overlooked."

Jim Nussle

Jim has worked on Iowa's health care priorities since coming to Congress and will continue to work on these goals in the 109th Congress.

Health Care Improvement Goals:

1. Attract Providers and Professionals to Rural and Under-served Areas
2. Provide Affordable Health Insurance for All Iowans
3. Promote Health Savings Accounts
4. Ensure Necessary Financing of Iowa's Medicaid Program
5. Put Health Care Decisions into the Hands of Iowans
6. End Expensive Lawsuit Abuse
7. Promote Prevention
8. Meet the New Health Challenges of the Aging Population

To achieve these goals, Jim has sponsored and co-sponsored many pieces of legislation. As the House Budget Committee Chairman, he has written many health care items into his budget. You will find more details on the following pages.

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayers expense,

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

www.nussle.house.gov

www.nussle.house.gov

Nussle's Health Care Agenda Legislation:

Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act

Including Nussle Iowa Provisions

- Provides more fair reimbursement for Iowa's hospitals by revising the calculation of labor costs.
- Promotes increased access to care by providing a 5% bonus payment to primary and specialty care physicians in rural areas for 2005 to 2007.
- Provides affordable, voluntary prescription drug coverage for seniors.
- Equity for rural and small urban areas' hospital base payments.
- Predictable reimbursements for physician services.
- Adds a 5% increase for all rural home health agencies until 2005.
- Provides flexibility for Critical Access Hospitals.
- Increases payment for emergency ambulance transportation trips.
- Provides for an increase of physician reimbursements in rural states for 2004 and 2005.
- *The final conference report for H.R. 1 was approved by the House on November 22, 2003 and the Senate on November 25, 2003. The President signed it into law on December 8, 2003.*

FY2006 Health and Human Services Appropriations (H.R. 3010)

- Provides \$28.6 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for critical research, an increase of \$253 million.
- Expands Community Health Center programs to \$1.7 billion, an increase of \$131 million.
- Ryan White AIDS program is increased to a total of \$2.1 billion.
- *Approved by Congress on December 21, 2005. Signed into law by the President on December 30, 2005.*

Deficit Reduction Act (S. 1932)

- Provides \$7.3 billion for physicians, preventing the scheduled 4.4 percent reduction in Medicare payments.
- Supports strengthening the Medicaid program so that funds are spent more effectively for those most in need.
- *Rep. Nussle chaired the House-Senate joint conference to write this legislation.*
- *Conference agreement was agreed to on December 19, 2005. The President signed this bill into law on February 8, 2006.*

2015 Cancer Goal

- Rep. Nussle co-signed a letter (Pryce/Shaw) to the President in support of the National Cancer Institute's goal of eliminating cancer death and suffering by the year 2015.

Rural Health Care Coalition (RHCC)

- Rep. Nussle has served as past chairman and is currently a member of the Steering Committee; Co-chair of the RHCC working group on beneficiary issues/access to health insurance.

Access to Care

HEALTH Act (H.R. 5)

- Reforms the health care liability system enabling physicians to provide patient access to care.
- *Cosponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *Approved by the House of Representatives on July 28, 2005.*

Health Coverage for the Uninsured Act (H.R. 1872)

- Provides further financial incentive for individuals to establish Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) by allowing for a 100 percent tax deduction of premium costs.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*

Small Business Health Fairness Act (H.R. 525)

- Adjusts current rules to benefit employees by including a yearly rollover for remaining flexible spending account (FSA) funds.
- *Approved by the House of Representatives on July 26, 2005.*

The Bipartisan Patient Protection Act

- Makes health care more accessible, holds HMOs accountable and adds important new patients' rights.
- *Approved by the House of Representatives on August 2, 2001. The Senate failed to take action prior to adjournment.*

Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act (H.R. 898)

- Establishes a national education and information campaign to promote stroke prevention and treatment.
- Authorizes grants for emergency medical personnel and medical facilities for treatment and rehabilitation.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*

Breast Cancer and Environment Research Act (H.R. 2231)

- Authorizes the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for research centers to study environmental factors that may be related to breast cancer.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*

Health Care Provider Assistance

Medicare Regulatory and Contracting Reform Act (H.R. 810)

- Streamlines the regulatory process and enhances education and assistance for health care providers.
- Reduces complex paperwork that burdens both doctors and seniors.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *The provisions of H.R. 2333 were included in H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, as signed into law by the President on December 8, 2003.*

American Hospital Preservation Act (H.R. 1710)

- Increases the amount of payment for inpatient hospital services under the Medicare Program.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *The provisions of H.R. 1710 were included in H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, as signed into law by the President on December 8, 2003.*

Medicare Area Wage Index and Standardized Rate Act (H.R. 1580)

- Establishes a floor for the Medicare wage index.
- Makes hospital base payments in all areas equal to that of large urban hospitals (standardized amount).
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *The provisions of H.R. 1580 were included in H.R. 1 and became law in December 2003.*

Health Care Access and Rural Equity Act (H.R. 1675)

- Provides for more equitable reimbursements for rural hospitals.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *The provisions of H.R. 1675 were included in H.R. 1 and became law in December 2003.*

Rural Provider Equity Act (H.R. 2333)

- Provides for more equitable Medicare reimbursement of health care providers including physicians and home health agencies.
- *Co-sponsored by Rep. Nussle.*
- *The provisions of H.R. 2333 were included in H.R. 1 and became law in December 2003.*

Cytology Proficiency Testing

- Rep. Nussle co-signed a letter (Myrick-Gordon) sent to the Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt expressing concern about new regulations on doctors created by the cytology proficiency testing program.

Chiropractors in Medicare

- Rep. Nussle co-signed a letter (Ramstad-Pomeroy) in support of a Medicare demonstration project for chiropractors to be included in Medicare legislation. The demonstration project was included in H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, as signed into law by the President on December 8, 2003. Iowa's Scott county was chosen as one of the sites for the project to begin in 2006.

Rehabilitation Hospitals/ "75% Rule"

- Rep. Nussle co-signed several letters to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) expressing concern with the so-called "75% rule" as it relates to rehabilitation hospitals.