



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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BAUCUS SAYS CONGRESSIONAL ACTION NEEDED TO MAKE REAL STRIDES ON QUALITY FOR MEDICARE, OTHER HEALTH PROGRAMS

Senator calls today's executive order "inadequate" on quality, transparency

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, commented late today on an executive order requiring Medicare and other Federally-financed health programs to make some changes regarding the sharing of cost and quality information and the adoption of interoperable technology. In 2005, Baucus was joined by Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) in introducing the Medicare Value-Based Purchasing Act (S. 1356), which calls on Medicare providers to develop measures that reflect quality health care in their fields.

“Although the executive order takes steps to improve price transparency and interoperability of health IT, it doesn’t require real information-sharing on the quality of care delivered through federal programs. Nor does it advance pay-for-performance within federal programs. Congress is clearly going to have to pass legislation to create and properly implement quality initiatives, and we should do that soon. Medicare and Medicaid can and should lead the way on quality reporting and improvement. I plan to review the language of this order further, watch to see its effects, and take action as appropriate.”

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