

United States Senate

Washington, D.C. 20510

Senators Work Together on Health Care Quality, IT Legislation

Bi-partisan bills in seek to modernize health care system

Event: News conference to announce two bi-partisan bills to be considered by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and Committee on Finance

Participants: Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa
Sen. Max Baucus of Montana
Sen. Mike Enzi of Wyoming
Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts

Date: Thursday, June 30, 2005

Time: 1:30 pm (ET)

Location: S-325, Senate Radio-TV Gallery

Description: On Thursday, these four senators will introduce two bills, the Medicare Value Purchasing Act (MVP) and the Health Information Technology and Quality Improvement Act (HITQI). The MVP Act falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Finance, where Grassley is the chairman and Baucus is the ranking member. The HITQI Act falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, where Enzi is the chairman and Kennedy is the ranking member.

The Health Information Technology Quality and Improvement Act would give health care providers the assistance they need to invest in lifesaving health information technology (IT). The two proposals work together to create quality payments under Medicare for physicians and practitioners, hospitals, health plans, skilled nursing facilities, home health, and end stage renal disease facilities, and establishing an information technology infrastructure that enhances health care quality.

The savings from better IT use are enormous. The federal government's estimate is that the nation would save \$140 billion each year from proper IT use. These savings from health IT could cut the cost of a family's insurance policy by over \$700. Despite the benefits of investment in health IT, utilization is low.

The MVP Act would implement recommendations from the Institute of Medicine and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission to establish financial incentives that promote quality care and better value in the Medicare payment system.

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