



OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN RON KLEIN  
FLORIDA'S 22<sup>ND</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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## Klein Votes to Pass Medicare Fix

### *Legislation protects doctor pay, ensure seniors' access to care*

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Representative Ron Klein (FL-22) today voted with a bipartisan majority of his colleagues to pass H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. This legislation eliminates the 10 percent payment reduction for Medicare physicians previously scheduled to go into effect July 1. It also enhances preventive care and mental health benefits for Medicare patients and provides additional assistance to low-income seniors.

“First and foremost, this legislation will block a devastating cut in reimbursements for doctors who care for our seniors and other Medicare patients,” Klein said. “Today, the House made a strong statement that we will not allow the President to balance the budget on the backs of doctors, hospitals, and patients. This bill ensures seniors will have access to the doctor of their choice in South Florida and nationwide.”

The bill blocks the scheduled cut in reimbursements to doctors accepting Medicare patients, and provides a 1.1 percent increase in Medicare physician payments for 2009, along with a 2 percent quality reporting bonus for doctors. Medicare beneficiaries also stand to gain from today's bill, most notably with greater access to critical preventative and mental health care. Beneficiaries will see lower out-of-pocket expenses for these types of care, and lower income beneficiaries will receive additional assistance. Importantly for South Florida, the legislation also postpones the Durable Medical Equipment (DME) competitive bidding program, which some have criticized as flawed.

“Because of the way doctors are paid under Medicare, we are facing a severe shortage of qualified physicians in South Florida,” Klein said. “This is an unacceptable situation. We owe it to our seniors to ensure that when they are sick, a doctor will be there to see them. Today's legislation is an important first step towards fixing our badly broken health care system.”

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