



BUDGET COMMITTEE



Judd Gregg, Ranking Member
<http://budget.senate.gov/republican>

Contact: Betsy Holahan (202)224-6011

For Immediate Release

March 19, 2010

Senator Gregg: Before the Vote, Congress and the American People Need to Better Understand Democratic Health Care Bill's Impact on Medicare and Medicaid Beneficiaries

Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, today joined Republican Senate and House leadership in requesting that the Chief Actuary of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provide a detailed analysis of the impact the package of Democratic health care bills will have on Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries as well as national health care spending. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the package this weekend; if passed, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act will go to the White House for enactment into law, and the reconciliation bill will be sent to the Senate.

“According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates, the health care reconciliation bill (H.R. 4872), when combined with the Senate-passed version of H.R. 3590, contains \$1.2 trillion in new health spending, one-half trillion dollars in cuts to Medicare and a massive \$434 billion expansion Medicaid,” said Senator Gregg and the other Republican members in a March 19 letter to CMS Chief Actuary Rick Foster.

“The House of Representatives is slated to vote in less than 72 hours on a package of health care bills that have just been provided to us and the American people...Before voting on these measures, Members of Congress and the American people must better understand what impact they will have,” the letter said, emphasizing that “the legislation coming before the House this weekend stands to alter one-sixth of our nation’s economy and fundamentally reshape the way health care is financed and delivered.” The letter asks that CMS provide analysis prior to the House vote expected on Sunday, March 21.

In addition to Senator Gregg, the letter was signed by Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, Senate Republican Whip Jon Kyl, Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Charles Grassley, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Ranking Member Mike Enzi, House Republican Leader John Boehner, House Republican Whip Eric Cantor, House Budget Committee Ranking Member Paul Ryan, House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Dave Camp, House Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Joe Barton, and House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member John Kline.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

Mr. Rick Foster
Chief Actuary
Office of the Actuary
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services,
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

Dear Mr. Foster,

The House of Representatives is slated to vote in less than 72 hours on a package of health care bills that have just been provided to us and the American people. According to Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates, the health care reconciliation bill (H.R. 4872), when combined with the Senate-passed version of H.R. 3590, contains nearly \$1.2 trillion in new health spending, one-half trillion dollars in cuts to Medicare and a massive \$434 billion expansion of Medicaid.


In order for Members of Congress to fully understand the impact of this legislation on the country and its health care delivery system, we respectfully ask that you promptly provide the following information:

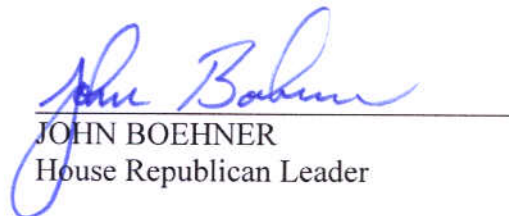
- **IMPACT ON NATIONAL HEALTH SPENDING:** First, and most importantly, your office is uniquely able to analyze the impact of pending health legislation on national health spending. We note that you warned that H.R. 3590 would increase national health spending by \$222 billion, in effect “bending the curve” in the wrong direction. As H.R. 4872 would modify that legislation, by spending an additional \$65 billion according to CBO, please provide an estimate of the combined impact of the two bills on National Health Expenditures, both over the next decade and over the longer-term horizon.
- **IMPACT ON MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES:** In reviewing H.R. 3590, the Senate passed version of health reform, you cautioned that “providers might end their participation in the program (possibly jeopardizing access to care for beneficiaries).” Can you please provide an evaluation of how the access problems posed by those Medicare changes would be affected by the subsequent enactment of the substitute to H.R. 4872, the Reconciliation Act of 2010 (released today), which CBO indicates would cut Medicare by an additional \$59.5 billion over the next ten years?
- **IMPACT ON MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES:** If enacted, these two bills would force an additional 16 million Americans onto the Medicaid program. In light of increasingly frequent reports that Medicaid’s low reimbursement rates make it difficult for enrollees to find doctors who will treat them, please indicate the extent to which your concerns about access to care for Medicare patients would also exist for Medicaid’s new and expanded population.


Before voting on these measures, Members of Congress and the American people must better understand what impact they will have.

Given that the legislation coming before the House this weekend stands to alter one-sixth of our nation's economy and fundamentally reshape the way health care is financed and delivered, we respectfully request that you immediately put the full resources and talents of your office behind analyzing these bills and to make public your findings in time for them to be reviewed prior to the expected House debate and vote on this legislation Sunday, March 21, 2010.


Sincerely,



MITCH MCCONNELL
Senate Republican Leader



JOHN BOEHNER
House Republican Leader

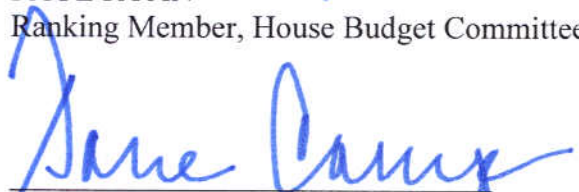

JON KYL
Senate Republican Whip

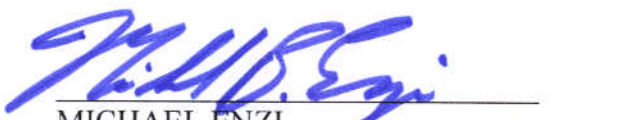

ERIC CANTOR
House Republican Whip

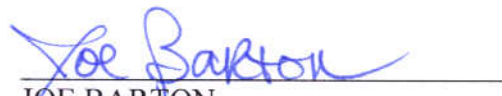

JUDD GREGG
Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee



PAUL RYAN
Ranking Member, House Budget Committee


CHARLES GRASSLEY
Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee


DAVE CAMP
Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee


MICHAEL ENZI
Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee


JOE BARTON
Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee


JOHN KLINE
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