

## CASTLE, LEVIN INTRODUCE BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION TO ENSURE END-OF-LIFE WISHES ARE RECORDED AND HONORED

Washington, DC -- Today, Congressman Michael Castle (R-DE) joined Representative Sander Levin (D-MI) as the lead Republican sponsor in introducing The Advance Directive Promotion Act of 2008 which aims to help ensure that a person's end-of-life plans are made, known, and respected. The legislation is designed to make more Americans aware of the importance of advance directives and the resources that can help them plan for end-of-life care.

"End-of-life care decisions are very personal. To ensure each person's final wishes are both recorded and respected, we must raise public awareness about the use of advance directives," said Rep. Castle. "The Advance Directive Promotion Act of 2008 provides a framework for important conversations about healthcare decisions surrounding end-of-life care."

This legislation has been endorsed by both the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the American Hospital Association (AHA).

"End-of-life planning is an emotionally taxing time for any family, but this bipartisan legislation will help to lessen that burden," said AARP CEO Bill Novelli. "Additional coverage and education for end-of-life planning will empower individuals to learn about their options and effectively communicate their decisions to loved ones and caregivers. Making advance directives more portable will finally allow these documents to keep up with today's active older Americans, both at home and on the road. We applaud Reps. Levin and Castle for their leadership on this issue, and we look forward to working with them to pass this vital bill."

"The American Hospital Association and our nearly 5,000 member hospitals are fully behind this timely and needed legislation," said Rick Pollack, AHA Executive Vice President. "The best way for people to retain control of their medical care as they face serious illness is to record their preferences in advance and share their decisions with their physicians and loved ones. This legislation would help provide people with needed resources and information for having these important discussions and making important health care decisions."

Specifically, the Advance Directive Promotion Act would:

Require health care providers to discuss advance directives with each beneficiary;

Amend the Medicare program so that the initial preventative physical exam all beneficiaries receive includes a discussion about advance directives;

Require the Agency of Health and Human Services to conduct a national public education campaign to raise public awareness of the importance of planning for care near the end of life;

Establish a national, toll-free information clearinghouse for the public to find out about state-specific information on advance directives and end-of-life care decision-making;

Require service providers to honor advance directives validly executed in other states.

For the Delaware Advance Directive Form and to learn more about advanced health directive options in Delaware, visit <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dsaapd/advance.html>.

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