

HOUSE OVERRIDES VETO OF PAYMENTS FOR PHYSICIANS -- July 15, 2008

Legislation will Prevent Cuts in Treatment for Medicare Patients

Washington, DC - Today, Rep. Mike Castle (R-DE) joined House colleagues in overriding the President's veto of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, H.R. 6331, by a vote of 383-41, to prevent a 10.6% cut in payments to physicians treating Medicare patients and replaces it with 18 months of stable payments. The scheduled cut was to go into effect July 1, but was temporarily postponed by the administration until today. Additionally, the bill extends the Special Diabetes Program for another two years until 2011, a priority of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus.

"Preventing scheduled cuts to physician reimbursement rates is essential for ensuring that seniors and the military continue to have access to physicians. Without this legislative fix, Medicare patients are in danger of losing the coverage they rely on," said Rep. Castle. "Congress has acted to stop cuts many times in past years, but only lasting reforms can ensure the solvency of Medicare. Congress and physicians need to agree on developing a long-term solution."

"As co-chair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus, I was also extremely pleased to see included a multi-year reauthorization of the successful Special Diabetes Program to fund type 1 diabetes research, which has led to breakthroughs like continuous glucose monitors, and type 2 treatment and prevention programs for Native Americans and Alaska Natives."

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