



PRESS STATEMENT

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SGR Reform within Reach Early Next Year... If Congress Can Find the Will

Statement by NCHC President and CEO John Rother on today's approval of SGR repeal and payment reform legislation by the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees

"Today's votes offer the full House and Senate a real opportunity early next year to repeal SGR and deliver better quality care at a lower price... if Congress can find the will to seize it.

The legislation approved today did not include offsets, and it is vital that any final bill employs smart savings designed to reduce costs through care improvement, not cost-shifting and blunt cuts to benefits or provider reimbursement. However, the Committees did act today to

- launch promising new initiatives which will help deliver better care at lower costs for beneficiaries facing chronic conditions
- accelerate the transition to cost-saving alternative payment models like ACOs and medical homes
- ensure that Medicare dollars are spent wisely by basing payment on the quality and value of care that beneficiaries receive; and
- take crucial first steps toward more health care transparency which would help providers deliver and consumers choose the best quality and value care possible.

While both Committees approved bills with shared core components, the Senate Finance Committee bill deserves particular praise for amended language which combats fraud, improves the bill's transparency language and bolsters mental health care. The Finance bill also includes provisions to extend Medicare and Medicaid programs for low-income enrollees and authority for Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan.

Overall, today's votes set an strong example for how to tackle the challenge of health care cost and quality through bipartisan agreement. The Committees ended the SGR's Medicare provider cuts and modernized the payment system for physicians and other professionals; the full House and Senate should follow their lead."

To learn more about NCHC's recommendations for reforming reimbursement and the broader health system, read its [Plan for Health and Fiscal Policy](#).