

Press Release: AAHSA President Comments on Sen. Baucus' Health Care Reform Proposal

Nov. 12, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from Larry Minnix, President & CEO, American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging on the Release of Sen. Baucus Health Care Reform Proposal

“We applaud Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) for releasing a health care proposal that includes long-term care and that is in such close alignment with our Five Big Ideas to transform aging services. We admire that his initiative addresses quality, finance, transitions, workforce, and technology in its efforts to determine how our health care system can become more rational and accessible to the millions of Americans who do not now have coverage.

“AAHSA shares Sen. Baucus’s view that wider application of technology to health care holds great promise for improving quality of care and increasing cost efficiency. We have worked intensely over the last several years on to bring technology solutions to aging services and we look forward to collaborating with Sen. Baucus in this effort.

“We also applaud Sen. Baucus’s proposal to promote service coordination among the various health care providers. This will serve as another means to both achieve better outcomes for patients and increase the value of the services paid for under private insurance and government programs. We hope Sen. Baucus’ plan will include our own proposal for aligning payment incentives with quality, which would require separate reporting of staffing expenditures on nursing facilities’ Medicare cost reports.

“We share Sen. Baucus’ call to change the Medicaid program so beneficiaries have more options to receive services in home- and community-based settings. Although Baucus’ proposal focuses on health services, we can’t forget that affordable housing and supportive services are essential for enabling frail elders to remain in the community, and increased resources are needed for these programs as well.

“But real change in the way we pay for all long-term supports and services is needed to ensure system more rational and affordable for all Americans. We hope Sen. Baucus will consider AAHSA’s structure for a national insurance trust to finance a system that offers consumer choice, equity of benefits, and fiscal responsibility for individuals while reducing dependence on the Medicaid program to finance long-term supports and services.”

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