



For Immediate Release

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BAUCUS APPLAUDS SENATE VOTE TO REJECT PLAN TO END MEDICARE

Finance Chairman Fought Tooth and Nail to Stop Efforts to End Medicare

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today applauded a Senate vote to reject the Republican budget proposal, which would have ended Medicare. The bill the Senate voted to reject would have cut more than \$2 trillion in health care benefits and nursing home coverage for seniors. According to the Wall Street Journal, the proposal would “essentially end Medicare” as it exists today and instead funnel Medicare dollars to private insurance companies to cover only a portion of seniors’ coverage. The proposal rejected today would have forced seniors to pay thousands of dollars more for their health care coverage and would have eliminated the guaranteed benefits Medicare currently provides.

“Today the Senate voted for America’s seniors,” said Baucus. **“Today we rejected a plan that would have cut seniors’ benefits, ended the guarantee of Medicare coverage and funneled Medicare dollars to private insurance companies. We will absolutely not balance the budget on the backs of America’s seniors – not on my watch. It’s time for a good dose of fiscal responsibility, but ending Medicare is in no way the prescription this country needs.”**

Today, the promise of Medicare means seniors will always receive the coverage they need and doctors, hospitals, treatments, surgeries and medicines will always be covered. And to receive these benefits, seniors have low, fixed costs like deductibles and co-pays.

Under the House budget plan the Senate voted to reject today, Medicare would be disassembled and converted into a “voucher-like” program. Under this plan, seniors would have to wade through significant paperwork and fine print to find a private plan that covered their medical needs. For coverage equal to the benefits Medicare offers today, seniors would have to pay much of the total cost, often thousands of dollars more, out of pocket. And, that plan wouldn’t necessarily cover the unforeseen medical conditions seniors could face over the course of the year.

Baucus said today that he supports efforts to balance the Federal budget, but insists that proposals are responsible and protect seniors. Baucus was a key author of the Affordable Care Act, which created new benefits for seniors in Medicare and made the program more fiscally sustainable, extending the fiscal solvency of the program by an additional twelve years, to 2029.

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