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BAUCUS: HEALTH REFORM HELPING SENIORS IN MEDICARE ADVANTAGE SAVE MONEY, INCREASING ENROLLMENT IN PLANS

Finance Chairman Applauds HHS Announcement Projecting Medicare Advantage Premium Declines For 2012 While Seniors Save on Brand-Name Prescription Drugs, Receive Free Screenings and Check-Ups

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) praised a report released today by Health and Human Services (HHS) projecting significant premium declines for seniors with Medicare Advantage plans for the second year in a row. As a chief architect of the Affordable Care Act, Baucus helped bring down costs and save seniors money by cutting wasteful overpayments to the private companies that administer Medicare Advantage plans. Prior to the Affordable Care Act's enactment, Medicare Advantage premiums were steadily increasing. Premiums next year are expected to be 11.5 percent below 2010 levels, while beneficiaries will have access to free screenings and check-ups and cheaper prescription drugs.

"Today's report confirms that health reform is strengthening Medicare – delivering real results for seniors and making our health care system more efficient. More seniors now have access to important preventive care and discounted prescription drugs with fewer out-of-pocket costs," said Baucus. **"We worked hard to craft health reform that would protect seniors from rising health care costs while improving care. Seniors in Montana and across the country are now seeing those reforms improve their lives and save them money."**

In addition to the continuing decline in average Medicare Advantage premiums, HHS also announced a projected 10 percent increased enrollment and improved plan options for beneficiaries in 2012.

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