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BAUCUS, GRASSLEY ANNOUNCE DATES FOR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS IN FINANCE SERIES ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

Discussions to focus on health care delivery system reform, coverage, and financing

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) today announced the schedule for the Finance Committee’s series of roundtable discussions on health care reform. The roundtables, which will cover health care delivery system reform, coverage, and financing, will take place throughout April and May. The roundtable series is intended to facilitate discussion between Finance Committee Members and health care policy and industry experts, and to inform the development of a comprehensive health care reform bill, which the Finance leaders have said they intend to mark up in June.

“These roundtables are designed to spark a dialogue on the health care solutions that Americans need now,” said Baucus. **“Working closely with my colleagues on the Finance Committee has been a priority throughout the health reform process. These roundtables are another opportunity for Members to bring their ideas on health care reform to the table and to hear from experts about those ideas as the health reform process moves forward.”**

“There’s a lot to fix and a lot to consider,” Grassley said. **“Congress should understand that every action to reform health care could have a reaction somewhere else. The experts can help us understand the complexities and challenges ahead.”**

The roundtable series will be open to the public and web cast on the Finance Committee website, www.finance.senate.gov. The schedule announced today follows here.

- **April 21, 2009** – *Reforming America’s health care delivery system*: this discussion will focus on improving the quality and efficiency of care through establishing value-based purchasing programs and strengthening the role of primary care, better managing patients with chronic illnesses, facilitating the use of comparative effectiveness research and other tools that support evidence-based care, reducing hospital readmissions, reforming payments to private plans in Medicare, and increasing transparency and reducing fraud and abuse in federally financed health care programs.
- **May 5, 2009** – *Increasing access to health care coverage*: this conversation will focus on potential policies to expand health care coverage to all Americans including proposals to strengthen the health care safety net, expand public health care programs, expand access to

private health coverage by creating premium subsidies for low-income Americans and reform the individual and small group health insurance markets, create tax credits for small businesses to afford insurance, make it easier to shop for and find affordable coverage options, and focus on the prevention of disease and promotion of healthy lifestyles.

- **May 14, 2009** – *Financing comprehensive health care reform*: this discussion will focus on policies to finance the cost of investing in comprehensive health care reform.

A list of participants for each roundtable will be released prior to the discussion date. The Finance leaders have also said they will hold closed-door policy “walk throughs” in the days following each roundtable discussion to provide Members with a further opportunity to discuss specific policy options.

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