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**BAUCUS, SEBELIUS OUTLINE BENEFITS OF NEW HEALTH CARE LAW
IN LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS, REDUCING DEFICITS**

Finance Chair Holds Hearing with HHS Secretary Sebelius on President's Budget

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today held a hearing with Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius examining ways the President's Budget works to ensure the nation's new health care law successfully lowers health care costs and reduces the deficit. Baucus played a central role in passing the health law and today asked the Secretary about progress in implementing modernizations in the law that improve the way America's health care system delivers care. These improvements will lower costs throughout the system, resulting in savings for families, businesses and the federal government.

"As we consider the President's budget proposal, we can be confident we are on the path toward more affordable health care costs due to the new health care law," said Baucus. **"The independent Congressional Budget Office has said that the new health care law will reduce the deficit by more than a trillion dollars. Our budget deficits remain a serious concern, but the health care law is certainly a significant step in the right fiscal direction."**

The new health care law, known as the Affordable Care Act, begins to move America's health care system into the 21st century by moving from a system that pays health care providers for the quantity of care they deliver to one that rewards the quality of care patients receive. This patient-centered approach helps to reduce costly problems like unnecessary hospital readmissions and hospital acquired infections. Over time, these efforts will lower costs throughout the system.

The non-partisan, independent Congressional Budget Office has said that the Affordable Care Act will reduce the deficit by more than \$230 billion in the first decade of the law's enactment and more than a trillion dollars in the decade after that.

The Affordable Care Act also protects patients from insurance company practices that would often leave patients paying for expensive care out of pocket. Many of these protections have already gone into effect, including rules that prevent insurance companies from refusing to provide coverage for children who are sick or were born with a chronic condition and from setting lifetime limits on the amount of care one patient can receive.

The new law is also already providing small businesses with tax credits to make offering coverage to employees affordable. And it is already reducing health care costs for seniors in Medicare by making prescription drugs more affordable and providing free preventive benefits like screenings for cancer and high blood pressure.

The Affordable Care Act also includes unprecedented new tools for law enforcement officials to fight fraud, waste and abuse in federal health care programs. Enforcement efforts have already paid significant dividends to taxpayers, with a record \$4 billion recovered last year.

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