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Contact: [Taylor Harvey](#) (202) 224-4515

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**Wyden Statement at Finance Committee Markup of Health Legislation**  
*As Prepared for Delivery*

Today marks the second time this month that the Finance Committee has considered bipartisan legislation that will improve health care for countless Americans. The legislation before us today is the product of a lot of hard, bipartisan work by many members of the committee and their staff, and it shows that there's real momentum behind making smart policy improvements in health care.

In my view, the permanent repeal and replacement of the unworkable Sustainable Growth Rate, along with a funding extension for CHIP, was just the start of this Committee's continuing effort to improve Medicare, Medicaid, and the larger health care system in this country. This set of bills makes a number of targeted improvements that will benefit patients, health care providers and others in a number of key areas.

For example, it will test some fresh new approaches to prevent low-income seniors from entering a nursing home. It will also reduce burdens for individuals with disabilities who rely on Medicaid for long-term care and services. And it will boost transparency in Medicare so seniors and people with disabilities will know what kind of care they are paying for. I'm also glad that several of these bills will help improve care in rural and under-served areas, such as ensuring therapy services are available.

Some may call this collection of bills "low-hanging fruit," but they're just plain wrong. When it comes to health legislation, every decision and change has consequences.

I would also like to commend Senator Hatch on leading the charge to bring these bills before us today. I recognize that not every bill that was considered ended up in the final package, and I want to thank other members of the Committee for engaging constructively throughout this process.

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