



NEWS RELEASE

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House and Senate Hagle Over Payroll Tax Bill, Which Will Affect Payments to Doctors

*Twila Brase of Citizens' Council for Health Freedom
Says Current Crisis is Due to Flawed Medicare System*

St. Paul, Minn.—The House of Representatives last night struck down an amended payroll tax cut bill passed by the Senate that would have delayed by two months drastic cuts in Medicare payments to physicians.

The recent votes on payroll tax cuts is part of a large legislative package, which also includes 27.4 percent Medicare sustainable growth rate (SGR) fee-for-service program cuts, slated to take effect on January 1, 2012. At the deadline, doctors will receive considerable lower payments—about 27 percent less—from Medicare for the services they provided.

The House wants a long-term fix to the Medicare problem, calling for a \$38.9 billion, two-year fix to the SGR formula. The Senate's amended version of that bill would freeze payments to physicians until Feb. 29. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has said that he will not re-open negotiations until the House approves the amended bill containing the two-month plan.

“This crisis,” said patient advocate Twila Brase, president of Citizens' Council for Health Freedom, a patient-centered national health policy organization based in St. Paul, Minn., “is not because of the SGR, but because of the Medicare program itself. Fully 19 million seniors were given free access to medical care when the program became law in 1965, just one year after the last baby boomer was born. Today's crisis was inevitable due to the Ponzi-scheme nature of Medicare.”

The pending 27 percent reimbursement cut is mandated by the SGR formula that links Medicare physician reimbursement rates to increases in the gross domestic product (GDP). Because spending on physician services has outpaced increases in the GDP, the formula has called for

cuts in reimbursement each year over most of the past decade. Congress, however, has always voted to push those cuts further down the road.

“With or without implementation of the SGR cuts,” Brase added, “senior citizens should expect increasingly explicit health care rationing strategies in Medicare. To avoid rationing, today’s young and middle-aged should begin making plans to get their health care outside of Medicare.”

Congress enacted the SGR in 1997, intending to cut the cost of health care. But since its scheduled implementation in 2002, Congress has been unwilling to anger voters by letting the payment cuts to doctors take effect. As the baby boomer population continues to swell, the burden on taxpayers is rising to an unsustainable level.

Twila Brase broadcasts a daily, 60-second radio feature, ***Health Freedom Minute***, which brings health care issues to light for the American public. ***Health Freedom Minute*** airs on the entire American Family Radio Network, more than 150 stations nationwide. During the daily features, **listeners can learn more about the agenda behind proposed health care initiatives and policies and what they can do to protect their health care choices, rights and privacy.**

Brase, a public health nurse and health care freedom advocate, informs listeners of crucial health issues, such as the intrusive wellness and prevention initiatives in Obamacare, patient privacy and the need for informed consent requirements, the dangers of “evidence-based medicine” and the implications of state and federal health care reform.

Health Freedom Minute is sponsored by the ***Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom***, a freedom-focused, patient-centered national health care organization based in St. Paul, Minn. ***CCHF*** supports patient and doctor freedom, medical innovation and the right of citizens to a confidential patient-doctor relationship.

For more information about ***Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom***, visit www.cchfreedom.org.

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For more information or to interview Twila Brase, president and co-founder of Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom, contact Michael Hamilton, Hamilton Strategies, 215.519.4838, 610.584.1096, MHamilton@HamiltonStrategies.com

Twila Brase is president and co-founder of the ***Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom***. She has been called one of the “100 Most Powerful People in Health Care” and one of “Minnesota’s 100 Most Influential Health Care Leaders.” The Council’s efforts have stopped government-issued treatment directives, added informed consent requirements for access to patient data and defeated a proposed Health Insurance Exchange. Brase’s daily radio commentary, ***Health Freedom Minute***, is a 60-second radio address on pressing health care issues.

Brase has been interviewed by CNN, Fox News, Minnesota Public Radio, NBC Nightly News, NBC’s Today Show, NPR, New York Public Radio, the Associated Press, Modern Healthcare, TIME, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Washington Times, among others.