

MARC Coalition Applauds House Passage of the Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act - H.R. 1063

Passage of legislation produces wins for Medicare beneficiaries, the Medicare Trust Fund and businesses resolving claims.

Coalition applauds Representative Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Ron Kind (D-WI) for their bipartisan leadership.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Medicare Advocacy Recovery Coalition (MARC) today applauded the U.S. House of Representatives for passage of **The Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act – H.R. 1063**. U.S. Representatives Dr. Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Ron Kind (D-WI) introduced the legislation in March 2011, and have been leading the bipartisan effort to make the Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) Program more efficient and cost effective to taxpayers. The SMART Act, which gathered 139 co-sponsors during its consideration, was passed by voice vote on the "suspension calendar" Wednesday afternoon. The legislation, which now moves to the Senate, will significantly improve the efficiency of the current Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) system and speed repayment of amounts owed from Medicare beneficiary claims directly to the Medicare Trust Fund.

"We are delighted that the House has approved the legislation," said Roy Franco, Co-Chair of MARC and representing the MSP efforts of Safeway. "We particularly appreciate the leadership of Representatives Murphy and Kind on this legislation, which will save taxpayers considerable funds, and streamline the Medicare process for tens of thousands of Medicare beneficiaries," he stated.

The SMART Act was estimated by the Congressional Budget office to save taxpayers \$45 million over 10 years. As part of the procedural effort to move the bill to the House floor, it was included within H.R. 1845, addressing a Medicare demonstration program.

Dean Pappas, Co-Chair of MARC and Vice President & Assistant General Counsel for Federal Affairs with Allstate Insurance Company, also applauded House action today. "The House action today represents a major step forward in MSP reform, which has been long overdue. Representatives Murphy's and Kind's effort to pass the SMART Act through the House demonstrates the bi-partisan cooperation needed to streamline the current system and bring good government to the MSP repayment process. The improvements proposed in the SMART Act will benefit Medicare recipients, businesses large and small, and the Medicare Trust Fund. We look forward to prompt Senate action as well," said Pappas.

The Coalition is particularly grateful to Representative Tim Murphy (R-Pa.) who stated on the House floor this afternoon: "The current Medicare Secondary Payer bureaucracy is causing

seniors to have their Social Security checks garnished and their Medicare coverage denied through no fault of their own. Our bill fixes these issues, and it ensures bureaucracy doesn't stand in the way of a settlement."

The SMART Act was also introduced in the Senate last year by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Rob Portman (R-OH). The SMART Act enjoys strong, bipartisan support, and has been endorsed by a broad variety of stakeholders, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National League of Cities, the nation's leading insurers, and retailers and other businesses large and small nationwide.

"Enactment of the SMART Act will produce a triple win. Medicare beneficiaries will be able to settle claims, companies will be able to resolve disputes faster and more efficiently, and the Medicare Trust Fund will be repaid quicker and more efficiently," says Franco.

About MARC:

The Medicare Advocacy Recovery Coalition (MARC) advocates for the improvement of the Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) program for beneficiaries and affected companies. The Coalition collaborates and develops strategic alliances with Congressional leaders and government agencies to focus on implementation of MSP reporting and on the broader issue of MSP reform. MARC's membership represents virtually every sector of the MSP regulated community including attorneys, brokers, insureds, insurers, insurance and trade associations, self-insureds and third-party administrators. For more information on MARC, please visit www.marccoalition.com.

SOURCE Medicare Advocacy Recovery Coalition