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McMorris Rodgers Votes to Override Presidential Veto on Medicare Cuts

(Washington, D.C.) Today, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers disagreed with the President and voted once again to prevent cuts to Medicare physician and pharmacy reimbursements.

McMorris Rodgers voted to override the Presidential veto of H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. The House overturned the veto by a vote of 383 to 41.

H.R. 6331 will, among other things:

- Prevent a 10.6% cut to Medicare physician reimbursements that were to take effect on June 30th, 2008;
- Provide a 1.1% increase in physician reimbursement rates for 2009;
- Provide incentives for doctors to use electronic prescription systems;
- Require Medicare to reimburse pharmacists for drugs prescribed within 14 days if pharmacists submit their claims electronically and within 30 days if submitted otherwise;
- Delay implementation of the new Average Manufacturing Price system, which may cause some pharmacists to be reimbursed 36% below cost to distribute generic Medicaid prescriptions;

“I am glad Republicans and Democrats came together today to prevent more cuts to Medicare. Those cuts to physician reimbursements make it even harder for Eastern Washington seniors to find doctors who will accept Medicare patients,” McMorris Rodgers said. “Congress needs to find a meaningful, long-term solution to funding Medicare—not one that saves money by not accurately paying doctors and pharmacists for the services they provide.”

McMorris Rodgers is a co-founder of the Community Pharmacy Caucus which is working hard to preserve access to community pharmacies. The loss of these pharmacies would leave many people, including a large number of seniors in rural areas of Eastern Washington, without a way to receive necessary medications.

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