

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) released the following statement regarding the vote on the House floor on the Physicians Medicare Payment Fix, also known as the Docs Fix (H.R. 3961):

“I support the intent of this legislation to halt the crippling physician payment cut, however the Democrats’ bill simply hits the reset button on these projected cuts and does nothing to permanently solve the underlying problem. The Democrats’ proposed ‘fix’ is really designed to appease special interests and mask the true cost of their plan for government takeover of health care. Shelling out another \$200 billion as this plan does will only add to our nation’s exorbitant deficit.

“I support the Republican plan which is a fiscally responsible, reasonable policy that will ensure doctors receive fair compensation without adding to our out of control debt. This alternative plan would address the impending Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) cuts, will do more to improve physicians’ Medicare reimbursements and will also rein in frivolous medical lawsuits – all without adding a dime to the deficit. This plan also includes a more generous increase in payment rates for doctors than H.R. 3961.”

Details on the Republican Plan:

- Increases physician Medicare reimbursement by 2% each year for the next 4 years.
- Keeps the scheduled 21.2% cut in 2010 and the roughly 5% cuts in 2011, 2012, and 2013 from occurring, and uses the remaining \$26.3 billion in savings to address future cuts.
- Provides a more generous physician payment increase. According to CBO, under the Democrats’ bill, doctors would receive a 1.2% increase in 2010 (and just like under the current SGR formula doctors could still see payment cuts in 2011). By contrast the Republican plan would provide for a 2% increases.

Savings totaling \$101, billion including:

- \$54 billion in savings from medical liability reform that would enact caps on non-economic damages and lawyers’ fees, encouraging speedy resolutions of claims, and limiting punitive damages, among other things. This will reduce defensive medicine, protect doctors from frivolous lawsuits, and bring down the cost of health care.

- \$22.3 billion from the “Medicare Improvement Fund,” which was established under MIPPA in 2008 (Public Law 110-275) and designed to improve physician payments.
- \$5.7 billion in savings from the creation of a pathway for approval at the FDA for bio-similar products with appropriate protections that continue to promote innovation while providing access to affordable drugs.
- \$19 billion in savings through enacting health insurance administrative simplification policies such as the creation of standardized forms and transactions.