



COMMITTEE on WAYS and MEANS

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Boustany Announces Hearing on Improving Efforts to Combat Health Care Fraud

Wednesday, February 23, 2011

Congressman Charles W. Boustany, Jr., MD, (R-LA), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Committee on Ways and Means, today announced that the Subcommittee will hold a hearing on improving efforts to combat health care fraud. **The hearing will take place on Wednesday, March 2, 2011, in Room 1100 of the Longworth House Office Building, immediately after a brief Subcommittee organizational meeting beginning at 2:00 P.M.**

In view of the limited time available to hear witnesses, oral testimony at this hearing will be from invited witnesses only. Witnesses will include experts on health care fraud from both the public and private sectors. Any individual or organization not scheduled for an oral appearance may submit a written statement for consideration by the Committee and for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

BACKGROUND:

Health care fraud costs the American taxpayer tens of billions of dollars every year, significantly increasing Medicare spending. As a GAO-designated "high-risk" program since 1990, Medicare continues to attract those who defraud the government through kickbacks, identity theft, and billing for services and equipment beneficiaries never receive or do not need. The Medicare program covered 47 million beneficiaries who are senior citizens or have disabilities in 2010 with estimated outlays of \$509 billion, according to GAO. With the Medicare Board of Trustees predicting that Medicare expenditures will reach nearly \$1 trillion per year by 2019, a rapidly increasing amount of taxpayer dollars will be vulnerable to fraud unless greater steps are taken to stem the tide.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that between 3 and 10 percent of health care spending is fraudulent. With the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services estimating current health care spending to be over \$2.5 trillion, anywhere from \$75 to \$250 billion is lost annually to fraud. As much as \$80 billion of this fraud is in the federal health care programs, including up to \$50 billion in Medicare alone. Though it is difficult to accurately quantify the total costs of health care fraud, experts at the National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association predict that with rising health care spending, total health care fraud, waste, and abuse could rise to as high as \$330 billion per year by 2013.

In announcing the hearing, Chairman Boustany said, **"The federal government borrows 41 cents for every dollar it spends, and a growing portion of this is within the Medicare program. At a time when the federal government is hemorrhaging money, we have to make every effort to stop fraud within the health care system. It is important that Congress oversee what is happening to this money. This hearing will explore recent efforts to combat Medicare fraud and what the government can be doing better. It will also explore what the private sector is doing to stop fraud and how public and private actors might better work together in this effort."**

FOCUS OF THE HEARING:

The hearing will focus on current policies and programs designed to prevent and punish Medicare fraud, as well as new and innovative practices aimed at preventing health care fraud in the private sector. The hearing will also explore how the public sector and private sector can learn from each other about new tools to combat Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse.

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Please Note: Any person(s) and/or organization(s) wishing to submit written comments for the hearing record must follow the appropriate link on the hearing page of the Committee website and complete the informational forms. From the Committee homepage, <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>, select "Hearings." Select the hearing for which you would like to submit, and click on the link entitled, "Click here to provide a submission for the record." Once you have followed the online instructions, submit all requested information. ATTACH your submission as a Word document, in compliance with the formatting requirements listed below, **by the close of business on Wednesday, March 16, 2011**. Finally, please note that due to the change in House mail policy, the U.S. Capitol Police will refuse sealed-package deliveries to all House Office Buildings. For questions, or if you encounter technical problems, please call (202) 225-3625 or (202) 225-2610.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

The Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record. As always, submissions will be included in the record according to the discretion of the Committee. The Committee will not alter the content of your submission, but we reserve the right to format it according to our guidelines. Any submission provided to the Committee by a witness, any supplementary materials submitted for the printed record, and any written comments in response to a request for written comments must conform to the guidelines listed below. Any submission or supplementary item not in compliance with these guidelines will not be printed, but will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

1. All submissions and supplementary materials must be provided in Word format and **MUST NOT** exceed a total of 10 pages, including attachments. Witnesses and submitters are advised that the Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record.
2. Copies of whole documents submitted as exhibit material will not be accepted for printing. Instead, exhibit material should be referenced and quoted or paraphrased. All exhibit material not meeting these specifications will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.
3. All submissions must include a list of all clients, persons and/or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears. A supplemental sheet must accompany each submission listing the name, company, address, telephone, and fax numbers of each witness.

The Committee seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-1721 or 202-226-3411 TTD/TTY in advance of the event (four business days notice is requested). Questions with regard to special accommodation needs in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats) may be directed to the Committee as noted above.

Note: All Committee advisories and news releases are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov/>.

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