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NCPA Pledges to Work with Senators Carper, Coburn on New Medicare, Medicaid Bill Intended to Reduce Unnecessary Spending

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (June 22, 2011) – U.S. Senators [Tom Carper](http://carper.senate.gov/public/) (D-Del.) and [Tom Coburn](http://coburn.senate.gov/public/) (R-Okla.) today introduced the *Medicare and Medicaid Fighting Fraud and Abuse to Save Taxpayers' Dollars Act* (or the Medicare and Medicaid FAST Act), which is aimed at eliminating waste, fraud and abuse in the twin entitlement programs. In response, the National Community Pharmacists Association's (NCPA) Executive Vice President and CEO, B. Douglas Hoey, RPh, MBA, issued the following statement:

“While NCPA is still reviewing this legislation, we applaud the efforts and the intent of Senators Carper and Coburn in trying to eliminate unneeded spending in Medicare and Medicaid. We look forward to working with the Senators and their staff during the legislative process and in implementing any new laws that are enacted to ensure that their goals are achieved in a way that is practical for patients and the independent community pharmacists who serve them.

“Like most Americans, community pharmacists believe that limited Medicare and Medicaid dollars should be targeted first and foremost to providing cost-effective, medically necessary services and products that help seniors and low-income individuals lead more productive lives. For example, the proper use of prescription drugs helps millions of Americans enjoy a richer quality of life and reduces the need for other costly medical services. Access to community pharmacists is vital to encouraging appropriate medication use and to reducing the estimated \$290 billion spent annually due to patients who don't take their medicine as prescribed. As [trusted](http://www.ncpanet.org/index.php/news-releases/833-ncpa-pharmacists-among-most-trusted-professions-in-gallups-2010-honesty-and-ethics-survey-) (<http://www.ncpanet.org/index.php/news-releases/833-ncpa-pharmacists-among-most-trusted-professions-in-gallups-2010-honesty-and-ethics-survey->), accessible healthcare providers, local pharmacists see the many benefits of successful medication therapy every day.

“Every dollar that is lost to fraudsters or misspent on bloated administrative expenses increases costs for everyone, jeopardizes patients' access to pharmacists and other providers and creates artificial pressure on provider reimbursements, which already don't necessarily cover the cost of providing care.”

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The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA®) represents the interests of America's community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 23,000 independent community pharmacies, pharmacy franchises, and chains. Together they represent a \$93 billion health-care marketplace, have more than 315,000 employees including 62,400 pharmacists, and dispense over 41% of all retail prescriptions. To learn more go to www.ncpanet.org or read NCPA's blog, The Dose, at <http://ncpanet.wordpress.com>.