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BURGESS AND GREEN LEGISLATION PROVIDES PATIENTS COST INFORMATION FOR HEALTH CARE

"PATIENTS COULD REVIEW THEIR OPTIONS WITH UP-FRONT INFORMATION ABOUT THE COSTS OF A MEDICAL PROCEDURE AND OTHER EXPENSES IN HEALTH CARE SERVICES."

Washington, D.C. —U.S. Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D. (TX-26) and U.S. Congressman Gene Green (TX-29) have introduced H.R. 5800, the *Health Care Price Transparency Promotion Act of 2012*. Their bipartisan bill aims to make health care more affordable by promoting greater transparency about the costs of health care services for patients.

"Patients could review their options with up-front information about the costs of a medical procedure and other expenses in health care services," Burgess said. **"A patient should be able to know what they are buying and how much they will pay out-of-pocket. Arming patients with cost information is an important step in improving our country's health care system with the focus on the patient."**

The Health Care Price Transparency Promotion Act directs the states to establish and maintain laws requiring disclosure of information on hospital charges. Additionally, the bill requires hospitals and health plans to make such information available to the public, and to provide individuals with information about estimated out-of-pocket costs for health care services.

Representatives Burgess and Green requested a General Accountability Office report, which found that cost information is helpful to patients, who often have difficulty accessing reliable and consistent price information.

Health care costs are increasing at an alarming rate. In 2010, total national health expenditures rose over 3.9 percent – just over double the rate of inflation. Total spending was \$2.6 trillion in 2010, or \$8,327 per person. Total health care spending represented 17.9 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. U.S. health care spending is expected to increase at similar levels for the next decade reaching \$4.6 trillion in 2020, or 20 percent of GDP.

"Our current health care system needs to be reformed. Unfortunately, with all of the bureaucracy and paperwork, few people including patients and physicians know where money is going. This makes it hard to identify the base problem and begin to help curb increasing health care costs," said Rep.

Green. "This legislation will be a first step in a long-term solution to clear up the confusion, and will let us move towards affordable, quality health care for all Americans."

The American Hospital Association endorses the Burgess-Green legislation, noting evidence of the ongoing success of states and state hospital associations to collect and disseminate hospital pricing information.