

## Press Release

### Price Introduces Legislation to Improve Medicare Quality and Efficiency

Washington, D.C.– Congressman Tom Price, M.D. (R-GA) issued the following statement after introducing legislation to improve Medicare efficiency and quality of treatment for beneficiaries. The *Quality Improvement Organization Program Restoration Act* (H.R. 5942) – co-sponsored by Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) and Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR) – would undo the restructuring of Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) made last year as part of a trade reform bill. The bill would restore and protect local control and ensure a collaborative system of quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries.

“ The current restructuring of the QIO program is unnecessary and could ultimately threaten the quality of health care,” said Rep. Price. “ To avoid disrupting or degrading that care, we ought to maintain local physician involvement in QIOs, keep the QIO program state-based in scope, and not hand greater authority to Washington. Measures must also be taken to ensure QIOs have a collaborative, integrated approach to improving quality of care that benefits both patients and health care providers. Restoring and reforming the QIO program will help Medicare offer patients better care while saving taxpayer dollars.”

#### **Background:** The *Quality Improvement Organization Program Restoration Act*.

- Restores a requirement for state-based QIO contracts instead of giving the Secretary of Health and Human Services the opportunity to regionalize or nationalize QIOs.
- Maintains local control and relationships within each state’s health care community.
- Continues the long-standing requirement for local physician involvement in peer review.
- Avoids a fragmentation of QIO functions by requiring an integrated, collaborative approach among health care stakeholders to help ensure continuum of quality care.

QIOs are private, mostly not-for-profit organizations, which are staffed by doctors and other health care professionals who review medical care and assist beneficiaries with complaints regarding care they have received in order to improve quality.