

Untitled document

## **Legislation passes House Energy and Commerce Committee by bipartisan voice vote**

March 6, 2012

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) supported legislation in the House Energy and Commerce Committee this morning that will repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), a board of unelected bureaucrats that would have the power to restrict access to health care for Medicare beneficiaries as a means of saving money. IPAB was originally created in the President's health care law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

H.R. 452, the Medicare Decisions Accountability Act, passed the Committee this morning by a voice vote and is expected to be considered in the full House of Representatives later this month.

Bass said:

"We've already seen the extent to which the President's health care law will infringe on an individual's right to make his or her own health care decisions, whether it's forcing providers to discontinue popular Medicare Advantage plans for seniors or mandating exactly what health care services employers have to offer regardless of their employees' needs or beliefs, and the law hasn't even taken full effect yet. Now the President wants to put an unelected board of 15 bureaucrats between seniors and their doctors.

"Subject to neither the normal administrative procedures nor safeguards, the Independent Payment Advisory Board will be able to operate outside of Congressional oversight. And more alarmingly, IPAB will ration care by threatening to force physicians to stop accepting new Medicare patients and by giving bureaucrats unchecked power to make health care decisions that should be left to patients and their doctors.

"We face difficult decisions about how to protect and preserve the Medicare program for current and future beneficiaries, but rationing care and leaving health care decisions to bureaucrats is not the answer. Repealing the flawed health care law once and for all is a start to enacting patient-based health care reform that will improve care, increase access, and lower costs for everyone."

Last June, the House Energy and Commerce Committee passed, with bipartisan support, an amendment offered by Bass that would ensure the Committee will oppose any plans that end Medicare, will recommend support for proposals to repeal provisions that provide an unelected, 15-member body to ration care for those 55 or older, and will work on proposals to preserve the program and save it from bankruptcy in 2024.

-- 30 --

