



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI, COCHRAN, TALENT PRAISE CMS DECISION TO RESTRICT
ADVERTISEMENTS ON MEDICARE DRUG CARDS***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Senator Jim Talent (R-MO), today praised the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) decision to restrict insurers sponsoring drug plans from co-branding (advertising) on Medicare prescription drug benefit cards.

“Co-branding created confusion for some seniors, because they were led to believe that they could fill their prescriptions only at the pharmacies that were advertising on their cards,” Enzi said. “I am pleased that CMS has agreed to stop this practice.”

Senator Cochran said: “Advertisements on Medicare prescription drug benefit cards have resulted in confusion among many beneficiaries, so I am pleased that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has recognized this and issued new regulations preventing such advertising. The new regulations that have been announced by CMS will prevent beneficiaries from believing that they may only use the pharmacy listed on their identification card. The Medicare Prescription Drug bill is proving to be a success in helping lower the cost of prescription drugs for our nation’s seniors and we continue to identify ways to make the system more user-friendly.”

Senator Talent said: “I applaud the decision to protect seniors by prohibiting multiple, and sometime confusing, logos on Medicare prescription drug cards. By doing this, our seniors can be assured that they have the choice to go to any provider they know and trust the most to get the medicine they need.”

A bill, the “Pharmacist Access and Recognition in Medicare Act,” S. 2563, introduced in April, and originally co-sponsored by Cochran, Enzi, and Talent, addresses the issue of co-branding by eliminating such marketing tactics and encouraging seniors to use whatever pharmacy they prefer, whether it’s their community pharmacy or a chain drug store.

Key provisions of S. 2563 also include:

- **ensuring prompt payment to community pharmacists** - Because community pharmacists do not have the negotiating leverage necessary to ensure they are reimbursed often enough to keep a positive cash flow (some are being reimbursed only every 45 days), this provision would specify that the Part D plan reimburse pharmacists every 14 days.
- **modifying medication therapy management services available to seniors** - In order to save seniors money on their prescriptions and to promote safe use of prescription drugs, the bill would modify federal medication therapy management services after The Wyoming PharmAssist Program, which directly connects patients with registered pharmacists to review their medications for possible drug interactions and duplications.

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