

November 19, 2009

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) today voted for legislation that will ensure physicians who treat Medicare beneficiaries are not hit with a costly 21 percent fee cut starting in January 2010. The Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act (H.R. 3961) will permanently reform the way in which Medicare reimburses physicians to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries continue to have access to quality care. This bill passed today by a vote of 243-183 and must still pass the Senate before it can be signed into law.

“If the scheduled 21 percent fee cut went into effect next January, there is a real possibility that many physicians who currently treat Medicare beneficiaries would stop doing so,” Altmire said. “Unlike years past, this Congress has passed a bill that will permanently reform this flawed payment system so that doctors are no longer faced with steep cuts each year. These reforms will help to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries can continue to see the doctors they know and trust.”

Since 2003, Congress has passed legislation each year to prevent physicians from being hit with a steep reduction in their Medicare reimbursements due to a flawed reimbursement formula. The legislation that passed today, unlike the legislation passed in previous years, would permanently fix the Medicare payment system to ensure that it more accurately accounts for the cost of health care spending in the future.