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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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February 24, 2011

Via Electronic Transmission

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you know, the House of Representatives passed the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (H.R. 1) on February 19, 2011.

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, I am charged with overseeing the Medicare and Medicaid programs and how changes in funding to these programs affect beneficiaries and providers.

Sections 4016 and 4018 are the two sections that attempt to “defund” the Affordable Care Act. My reading of those two sections raises questions I would like your assistance in resolving.

Please tell me how sections 4016 and 4018 of H.R. 1, should they become law, would impact your ability to continue operating Medicare and Medicaid for the more than 100 million Americans who rely on those programs. How would these sections affect beneficiaries’ access to care? Would doctors, other health care professionals, and private plans continue to receive timely payments under these programs?

I know that you share my concerns for Medicare and Medicaid, as well as all of the Americans whose well-being depends on the seamless operation of those programs. I look forward to your response and thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Max Baucus
Chairman