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REPRESENTATIVE SCHAKOWSKY HAILS SECRETARY HERMAN'S EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN PATIENTS' INTERNAL APPEALS PROCESS

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR PROPOSES NEW RULES FOR HEALTH PLANS REGULATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In a letter to Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and 22 members of Congress, hailed the Department's proposals to improve the internal appeals procedures for health care plans regulated by the Department.

The Department of Labor issued the proposed rules in response to a Presidential Executive Order, which was based on recommendations by the President's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in Health Care. The Commission had recommended a series of patient protections, including "a rigorous system of internal review and an independent system of external review" to allow patients to challenge adverse determinations by HMOs and other insurers.

Rep. Schakowsky said, "I am pleased that the proposed action taken by Secretary Alexis Herman will help many consumers receive the critical care they need by providing them with a fair and timely opportunity to challenge denials, limitations or terminations of care at the plan level. But it is only the first step in a long process."

"Health Maintenance Organizations and insurance providers must be held accountable and other patient protections, including external review standards, must be enacted into law," Rep. Schakowsky added.

Rep. Schakowsky's letter to Secretary Herman is attached. The letter contains a description of the provisions in the proposed rules supported by Rep. Schakowsky and her Colleagues.