

*Washington, D.C. (May 24, 2012)* – Today, Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) responded to a report issued by the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services with updated data on the savings that seniors are receiving due to the health care law, the Affordable Care Act.

In the first four months of 2012, more than 416,000 people with Medicare saved an average of \$724 on prescription drugs and 12.1 million used a free preventive service. More than 5.1 million people with Medicare saved over \$3.2 billion on prescription drugs since the health law took effect.

“The numbers don’t lie, Obamacare is working for millions of people, especially seniors across the country,” **said Rep. Schakowsky.** “ The gap in coverage for prescription drugs left many seniors to pay thousands of dollars on their own – all the while paying premiums for a benefit they were not receiving. I will continue to fight against those who wish to take away the important health care benefits that have already begun to make a significant difference the lives of so many Americans.”

Under the new health care law, seniors and people with disabilities in Medicare saved a total of \$301.5 million so far in 2012 on the prescription drugs they purchased after they hit the prescription drug coverage gap or “donut hole.” In 2011, people with Medicare began receiving a 50 percent discount on covered brand name drugs and 7 percent coverage of generic drugs in the “donut hole.” This year, Medicare coverage for generic drugs in the coverage gap has risen to 14 percent. Coverage for both brand name and generic drugs in the gap will continue to increase over time until 2020, when the coverage gap will no longer exist.

In addition, from January through April 2012, 12.1 million people in traditional Medicare have already received at least one preventive service at no cost to them – including over 856,000 who have taken advantage of the Annual Wellness Visit provided in the Affordable Care Act. In 2011, over 26 million people in traditional Medicare received one or more preventive benefits free of charge. Prior to 2011, people with Medicare faced cost-sharing for many preventive benefits like cancer screenings and smoking cessation counseling.

For more information on how the Affordable Care Act closes the Medicare drug benefit coverage gap “donut hole,” please visit: <http://www.healthcare.gov/law/features/65-older/drug-discounts/index.html>

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