

## **Dems Criticize Medicare Official's Waiver**

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WASHINGTON (AP) - Two House Democrats on Thursday criticized Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson for allowing the top Medicare official to take part in drafting the new Medicare law while he was looking for work in the private sector.

Thomas Scully, the Medicare administrator, will leave his job next week. He said last week that Thompson had allowed him in May to be involved with the legislation though he had discussed working for law and investment firms that have clients deeply affected by the bill.

In their letter to Thompson, Reps. Jan **Schakowsky** of Illinois and Pete Stark of California said, "At best, this waiver is unseemly. At worst, it may well have lead to enactment into law of provisions to benefit particular special interests rather than the public good."

Scully said he never met with the firms or their clients to discuss the legislation. He attributed the criticism to "people who opposed the bill who are just looking for something to be unhappy about."

**Schakowsky** and Stark voted against the bill.

They asked Thompson if he has granted other similar waivers. His office did not immediately respond to that question.