



## COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

Chairman Fred Upton  
113th Congress

**Floor Statement of Chairman Fred Upton**  
**H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act**  
**March 14, 2014**  
**4 minutes**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Mr. Speaker, we are here today to vote for a bill that would provide certainty and peace of mind to our nation's seniors and fairness for all Americans under the president's health care law. Repeal of the system of physician cuts under Medicare, or SGR, has been a problem that has plagued seniors, doctors, and Congress for well over a decade. These cuts have threatened access to our seniors' health care and the Medicare promise that our country has made to every American – both those in the program today and those who count on it as part of their future retirement.

Our purpose here today is Medicare reform so that we can keep the promise made to all seniors, current and future. The Medicare program is going insolvent, and Congress will need to act if we are to prevent bankruptcy. Today is one step toward keeping the Medicare promise. Many of us did roundtables with our doctors back home, I did so in Michigan, and we visited with countless seniors. We heard their concerns loud and clear and have acted.

H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act, is the product of years of bipartisan efforts to remove the threat of SGR. The legislation would once and for all repeal the broken SGR and replace it with a system that promotes the highest quality of care for seniors, eases the burden on physicians who are struggling under an increasing number of government programs that take time away from patients, and promotes new forms of health care delivery and innovation with an eye on the future.

We stand here today on the House floor in no small part because of our speaker, John Boehner, who charged the Energy and Commerce Committee to find a workable solution to get rid of SGR. This has been a long journey with many important players on both sides of the aisle, and in both chambers. I do want to commend Health Subcommittee Chairman Joe Pitts for helping lead the effort and the bill's sponsor Dr. Michael Burgess, for his tireless commitment from day one. We also would not be here without the efforts and support of the GOP Doctors Caucus – a group who understands all too well the threat that SGR has posed. And of course I appreciate our partnership with my good friend Dave Camp and the Ways and Means Committee.

While this is a significant milestone, the cost of SGR repeal is not insignificant. We have strived over the past few months to find common ground with the Senate to identify a way to pay for this agreement that both chambers can support. Time is not on our side as the current patch is set to expire at the end of this month. So today the House has chosen to act rather than stand

idly by and is prepared to send a bill to the Senate with a bipartisan payfor: relief for individual Americans from the mandate that they purchase government-approved insurance.

The White House has already seen fit to delay many parts of the president's health care law, including the employer mandate. And it has also quietly delayed the individual mandate for the millions of Americans whose health care plans the law cancelled. If Senate Democratic colleagues don't want to afford individuals the same rights as special interests with a direct line to the president, then I would ask them to simply pass their own fully offset SGR package and let's go to conference to iron out our differences. But make no mistake, SGR must be paid for.

We have never come this far in finding a permanent solution. But there is still much work to be done after today's vote, and I call on my good friend Senator Ron Wyden to pick up the torch and work with Majority Leader Harry Reid to put politics aside, stand up for our seniors and doctors, and let's solve SGR this year.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4015 and the millions of seniors who are watching us here today. I yield back the remainder of my time.

###