

(March 15, 2006) Lipinski Urges Action on Common Sense Hospital Price Reporting Bill

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Congressman Lipinski Testifies At Health Subcommittee Hearing

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-IL) today testified at a hearing of the Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, regarding his Hospital Price Reporting and Disclosure Act. This bill would require hospitals to provide clear, concise information about what they charge for common procedures and medications.

"We all want more information available when making health care decisions for ourselves and our families," said Lipinski. "This knowledge is especially crucial to the 46 million uninsured Americans. While we work to get coverage for the uninsured, it is imperative to give them the information that will help in their health care choices."

Last July, Lipinski and Congressman Bob Inglis (R-SC) introduced H.R. 3139, the Hospital Price Reporting and Disclosure Act, which would require hospitals to regularly report to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) the amount they charge for the twenty-five most commonly performed inpatient procedures, the twenty-five most common outpatient procedures, and the fifty most frequently administered medications. HHS would then post this information on the Internet for easy public access. Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL), Jim DeMint (R-SC), and John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced a companion bill in the Senate, S. 1827.

"Most of us would never consider getting our car repaired without first receiving an estimate of the charges, but this is exactly what we do when we need to go to a hospital for treatment," said Lipinski. "It's time to give all Americans the ability to make informed choices about where they seek medical care."

Numerous states have taken recent action on this issue. States like Illinois, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, and South Dakota

have all passed legislation that require the disclosure of prices charged by hospitals for both in-patient and out-patient procedures. Wisconsin already has this kind of information available to the public on an easy-to-access, user-friendly website (wipricepoint.org). At least 10 more states currently have legislation pending.

"This issue is not Democratic or Republican," Lipinski said. "When I'm home in Illinois talking to my constituents, they call this bill one thing - common sense. We expect to have price information for every other purchase that we make, so it only makes sense that we have the same when purchasing healthcare. Because when it comes to health care, information is good for you."