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ADS MISLEAD PUBLIC, CENTER FOR MEDICARE ADVOCACY WARNS

Recent ads by the two nursing home trade associations that represent for-profit facilities, the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care and the American Health Care Association, disparaging Connecticut Congressmen Joe Courtney and Chris Murphy and other Members of Congress for their vote in favor of the Children's Health and Medicare Protections (CHAMP) Act are wrong and misleading. As long-time advocates for nursing home residents, the Center for Medicare Advocacy is appalled by the ads.

The ads allude to cuts to nursing homes, but the reality is that the CHAMP Act merely freezes current payments to nursing homes for one year – as recommended by the nonpartisan Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, which has repeatedly expressed concerns about overpayments to nursing homes.

In recent years, despite generous Medicare payment increases, nursing homes have decreased the number of nurses, and the amount of physical therapy provided to residents has declined. Increased Medicare payments are not providing better care for residents; instead public money is landing in industry coffers, funding generous compensation and bonuses to owners and management. For example, the CEO of Manor Care, a leading corporate provider of nursing home care, will receive between \$118 and \$186 million when his company is bought by the Carlyle Group, a global private equity firm. While management in for-profit corporations has flourished through Medicare reimbursement, resident care has not.

CHAMP is good medicine for people of all ages. It's a shame that the nursing home industry suggests otherwise and is trying to pit older people against children.

The CHAMP Act unites generations by making improvements in both Medicare and SCHIP, the health program for children, which will help both populations gain access to healthcare. For Medicare beneficiaries, CHAMP expands preventive benefits, improves payments to doctors, improves the programs that help low-income people make Medicare co-payments, and improves the long-term viability of the Medicare program. For uninsured children, CHAMP expands coverage of a program that has proven successful in getting healthcare to children in need.

The public should not be misled by the false allegations in these industry-sponsored ads.