



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Extension of benefits for low-income individuals, ban of Medicare and Medicaid funding for certain prescription lifestyle drugs
Da: Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2005

Tonight the Senate gave final approval to legislation that for two years extends the Qualified Individual program that assists low-income individuals with their Medicare Part B premiums and for three months extends Temporary Medical Assistance for families making the transition from welfare to work. The bill also includes a grant to Hurricane Katrina-affected states to help pay for their regular unemployment benefits. The measure also includes a ban of federal funding through Medicare and Medicaid for lifestyle prescription drugs such as Viagra, Cialis, and Levitra. The bill now goes to the President for his consideration. Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, has worked to extend the provisions for low-income individuals. Also, in May he introduced legislation to eliminate federal payments for the lifestyle prescription drugs. Grassley made the following comment on the bill passed tonight.

“This legislation extends very important benefits for people who live on the edge of poverty. They won’t see any interruption in benefits. And the provision included to offset the cost of these programs recognizes that taxpayers shouldn’t have to pay for certain lifestyle prescription drugs through Medicare and Medicaid. We have to sustain federal health care programs, and every bit helps.”