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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

Comptroller General Walker Announces Appointment of Members to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission

WASHINGTON, May 5, 2006 – Comptroller General of the United States David M. Walker has appointed four new members and reappointed two members to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC). The official announcement will be published in the Federal Register.

MedPAC is an independent federal body that was established in 1997 to analyze access to care, quality of care and other issues affecting Medicare. MedPAC also advises Congress on payments to health plans participating in the Medicare Advantage program and to providers in Medicare's traditional fee-for-service programs.

The Comptroller General, who heads the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), is responsible for naming new commission members. "We had many more qualified applicants than open positions. This is encouraging because successfully addressing our nation's many health care challenges will require the sustained efforts of many individuals over many years. I'm pleased that our current MedPAC leaders have accepted re-appointment, and that four additional very capable individuals have agreed to join the other MedPAC members to help tackle these important issues," said Walker.

The newly appointed members, whose terms will expire in 2009, are **Mitra Behrooz, J.D.**, executive director, 1199SEIU Benefit and Pension Funds; **Karen R. Borman, M.D.**, professor of surgery and vice-chair for surgical education, University of Mississippi Medical Center; **Ronald D. Castellanos, M.D.**, physician, Southwest Florida Urologic Associates; and **Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Ph.D.**, director, Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Geoeconomic Studies and Paul A. Volcker Chair in International Economics, Council on Foreign Relations.

The reappointed members, whose terms also will expire in 2009, are **Glenn M. Hackbarth, J.D.** (chair), independent consultant; and **Robert D. Reischauer, Ph.D.** (vice chair), president, the Urban Institute.

Commissioners whose terms will expire in April 2007 are **John M. Bertko, F.S.A., M.A.A.A.**, vice president and chief actuary, Humana Inc.; **Sheila P. Burke, M.P.A., R.N., F.A.A.N.**, deputy secretary and chief operating officer, Smithsonian Institution; **Francis J. Crosson, M.D.**, executive director, the Permanente Federation, LLC; **Arnold Milstein, M.D., M.P.H.**, medical director, Pacific Business Group on Health; **Ralph W. Muller**, chief executive officer, University of Pennsylvania Health System; and **William J. Scanlon, Ph.D.**, health policy consultant.

Commissioners whose terms will expire in April 2008 are **Nancy-Ann DeParle, J.D.**, senior advisor, JP Morgan Partners, LLC and adjunct professor of health care systems, the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; **David F. Durenberger**, chairman and chief executive officer, National Institute of Health Policy; **Jennie Chin Hansen, R.N., M.S.N.**, member, Board of Directors, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); **Nancy M. Kane, D.B.A.**, professor of management, Department of Health Policy Management, Harvard School of Public Health; and **Nicholas Wolter, M.D.**, chief executive officer, Billings Clinic.

Following are brief biographies of the new commission members. For more information about MedPAC, contact MedPAC's executive director, Mark E. Miller, Ph.D., at (202) 220-3700. All other calls should be directed to GAO's Office of Public Affairs at (202) 512-4800.

Mitra Behroozi, J.D., is the executive director of 1199SEIU Benefit and Pension Funds. Ms. Behroozi oversees eight major benefit and pension funds for health care workers. Collectively, the funds are among the largest in the nation with \$8 billion in assets, and each year they provide \$1.5 billion in health care, pension, and other benefits to nearly 500,000 individuals. Previously, Behroozi was a partner with Levy, Ratner & Behroozi, PC, representing New York City unions in collective bargaining negotiations and proceedings. While at the law firm, she also served as union counsel to Taft-Hartley benefit and pension funds. Behroozi has a law degree from New York University and an undergraduate degree in sociology from Brown University.

Karen R. Borman, M.D., is a professor of surgery and vice-chair for surgical education at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. She is a member of the American College of Surgeons' General Surgery Coding & Reimbursement Committee, and is on the board of directors of the American Board of Surgery. Dr. Borman was a member of the executive committee and vice-chair of the American Medical Association's Current Procedural Terminology editorial panel. Dr. Borman frequently works with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on issues related to the Medicare fee schedule, coding, assistants-at-surgery coverage policies, and the Medicare Resource Based Relative Value Scale. She also has served in various positions at the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, the Association for Academic Surgery, the Association of Program Directors in Surgery, and the Association for Surgical Education. Dr. Borman earned her medical degree from Tulane University. Her undergraduate degree in chemistry is from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Ronald D. Castellanos, M.D., has practiced urology for more than 30 years in Fort Myers, Florida. For the past four years Dr. Castellanos has been a member, and for the last year the chair, of the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council, which advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on proposed changes to Medicare rules and regulations on physician services. Dr. Castellanos was president of the Florida Urologic Society and has worked with several other organizations on health policy, including the American Urologic Association and the American Lithotripsy Society. Dr. Castellanos earned his medical degree from Hahnemann Medical College. His undergraduate degree is from Pennsylvania State University.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Ph.D., is the director of the Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Geoeconomic Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he holds the Paul A. Volcker Chair in International Economics. He most recently served as the director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and was previously the chief economist for the President's Council of Economic Advisors. He also represented CBO on the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board. Before joining the federal government Holtz-Eakin taught at Syracuse University's Maxwell School, where he chaired its Department of Economics and was associate director of the Center for Policy Research. His recent research has centered on the economics of fundamental tax reform; the productivity effects of public infrastructure; income mobility in the United States; and the role of families, capital markets, health insurance, and tax policy in the start-up and survival of entrepreneurial ventures. Holtz-Eakin has a Ph.D. in economics from Princeton University and a B.A. in economics and mathematics from Denison University.

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