

News Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**State Long Term Care Leader: Massive Federal Medicare Cuts
Enacted Friday Will Hurt Seniors, Cost Jobs**
*Urges Louisiana Congressional Delegation to Help Ensure Seniors' Care
Needs Remain Key Priority of Health Care Reform*

Baton Rouge, LA – The Executive Director of the Louisiana Nursing Home Association (LNHA) warned that new federal Medicare cuts of up to \$16 billion resulting from Friday's announcement by the Obama Administration that it has put into effect a new Medicare regulation will significantly endanger Louisiana seniors' care and jeopardize the state's already fragile economy and caregiver jobs base.

“We intend to make certain the interests of seniors remain a priority for lawmakers as they pursue health care reform in Washington, and will make sure they understand that the Medicare funding cuts are unsustainable,” Joseph Donchess, Executive Director of LNHA said.

Continued Donchess: “Having now just suffered a massive Medicare funding cut of up to \$16 billion – distinct and separate from the reductions our sector has willingly and cooperatively agreed to shoulder as part of achieving broader reform – we are alarmed the sheer size of the cumulative cuts we ultimately suffer will be especially

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damaging to seniors in states like Louisiana. Medicare cuts will squeeze our local facilities in a manner harmful to Medicare beneficiaries' care needs, detrimental to our state's local economy, and injurious to our caregiver jobs base.”

Donchess noted that Louisiana nursing homes are seeing an increasingly diverse patient base, and providing a greater variety of acute care, rehabilitative and convalescent services that cannot be delivered elsewhere – care services which are now in jeopardy due to the sheer size and scope of the Medicare funding cuts. These massive funding cuts, Donchess said, will undermine facilities' ability to effectively treat this more medically complex patient population, and also put the jobs of the direct care workforce they depend upon in substantial danger.

“Achieving a sweeping health care reform bill we can all be proud of, and which will improve the health of every Louisiana resident is a necessity, not an option,” Donchess continued. “Yet, protecting vulnerable seniors in the process must always remain a key priority from which we must not deviate.”

During the upcoming August recess, Donchess said, the long-term care community will ask federal lawmakers to keep the interests of seniors and those who care for them foremost in their minds. “We intend to explain in a tangible, informative manner why it is essential for Congress, upon its return to Washington in September, to recalibrate its thinking on health care reform and scale back these enormous Medicare cuts.”

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