Republican Budget Would Have Devastating Impact on Seniors Enrolled in Medicare

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) issued the following statement after the White House released a new report detailing how the Affordable Care Act is working to lower costs and provide better care for Maryland seniors enrolled in Medicare:

"Health reform is already providing benefits to many Maryland seniors enrolled in Medicare," **stated Congressman Hoyer.**
"From a 50% discount on brand name drugs to free preventive care, health reform continues to have a very positive impact on Maryland seniors. For far too long, seniors struggled with the skyrocketing costs of health care, and this report proves that health reform is working to make health care more affordable and accessible, making a difference in the lives of seniors here in Maryland and throughout the nation."

According to the new report , the Affordable Care Act is working to strengthen Medicare and is already helping the 797,185 seniors on Medicare in Maryland take charge of their health. Seniors in Maryland have received the following benefits in the last year – and can look forward to even more in the current year – as a result of the Affordable Care Act:

- **Prescription Drugs:** In 2010, 55,107 Maryland residents on Medicare who hit the Medicare prescription drug "donut hole" received a tax-free $250 rebate check, saving enrollees in Maryland $13.8 million. In 2011, all Maryland residents on Medicare who hit the prescription drug donut hole will receive a 50 percent discount on their brand name prescription drugs and cheaper generic drugs.

- **Free Preventative Care:** In 2010, Medicare charged co-pays and deductibles for preventive services like mammograms and other cancer screenings to the 775,684 Maryland residents on Medicare. In 2011, all 797,185 Maryland residents on Medicare may receive recommended preventive services with no out-of-pocket costs.

- **Free Wellness Visits:** In 2010, Medicare did not offer one free annual checkup to the 775,684 Maryland residents on Medicare. In 2011, all Maryland residents on Medicare may receive a free annual wellness visit.

- **Lower Premiums:** All 775,684 Maryland residents on Medicare paid nearly $8 less per month in Medicare Part B Premiums than the Medicare Trustees projected in 2009.

- **Medicare Advantage:** 100% of Maryland residents on Medicare had the option of joining a Medicare Advantage plan.

Hoyer continued: “Unfortunately, the budget adopted by House Republicans would end Medicare as we know it and undo these benefits. I strongly believe that getting our debt under control demands hard choices and cannot be pushed off, but ending Medicare as we know it and shifting health care costs onto seniors as the Republican budget intends to do is not the responsible answer. I am committed to working to ensure we take care of our older Americans and keep Medicare solvent for years to come.”

To view the complete report, including a helpful chart highlighting the benefits that are available to seniors in Maryland, click here .