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**Coalition to Protect Senior Care Applauds Inclusion of Long Term Care in Senate Finance Committee Roundtable Discussion on Health Care Delivery System Reform**

**Joplin, MO (April 22, 2009)** – The Coalition to Protect Senior Care (CPSC) – a national coalition of frontline clinician and caregiver groups providing quality skilled nursing care – commended the U.S. Senate Finance Committee for including long term care considerations in yesterday’s roundtable discussion on Reforming America’s Health Care Delivery System. The discussion was the leading session in a series of roundtables on the financial aspects of health care reform as Congress considers comprehensive health care reform legislation this year.

“Speaking on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of dedicated front-line caregivers in America’s skilled nursing facilities, we commend Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley and the Committee for recognizing the vital role long term care plays within the spectrum of health care delivery by including eldercare as part of this important policy roundtable,” said Lori Porter, co-founder of the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA) and CPSC. “As-is, direct care workers in skilled nursing facilities are already challenged with funding issues and staffing shortages, estimated at 110,000 nationwide; we particularly hope to work with Congress to stimulate job growth in long term care in order to not only improve patient care, but also help stimulate critical economic recovery efforts.”

The roundtable, led by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), discussed improving the quality and efficiency of care through establishing value-based purchasing programs and strengthening the role of primary care, better managing patients with chronic illnesses, facilitating the use of comparative effectiveness research and other tools that support evidence-based care, reducing hospital readmissions, reforming payments to private plans in Medicare, and increasing transparency and reducing fraud and abuse in federally financed health care programs. It will be followed by a May 5 discussion on increasing access to health care coverage and a May 14 roundtable on financing comprehensive health care reform.

Roundtable participants included: Paul J. Diaz, J.D., Kindred Healthcare; Glenn Hackbarth, J.D. MedPAC ; Allan M. Korn, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association; Peter V. Lee, J.D., Executive Director, Pacific Business Group on Health; Mark McClellan, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Engelberg Center for Health Care Reform and Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, Brookings; Lewis Morris, J.D., Office of the Inspector General, HHS; Mary D. Naylor, Ph.D, FAAN, R.N., University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing; Debra Ness, President, National Partnership for Women and Families; Frank G. Opelka, M.D., FACS, American College of Surgeons; Glenn Steele Jr., M.D., Ph.D, President,

Geisinger Health System; John Tooker, M.D., MBA, FACP, Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, American College of Physicians; Richard Umdenstock, FACHE, American Hospital Association; and Ronald A. Williams, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Aetna Inc.

“The Coalition appreciates the inclusion of long term care in this discussion and looks forward to collaborating with Committee members as Congress approaches comprehensive reform to ensure the continued delivery of complete, quality long term care for Americans now and in years to come,” added Porter. “As our aging population continues to grow and require greater levels of skilled nursing care services, we must keep eldercare needs – including the provision of adequate funding and staffing measures – top of mind in broader discussions on health care reform.”

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#### About the Coalition to Protect Senior Care

The Coalition to Protect Senior Care consists of the American Association for Long Term Care Nursing (AALTCN); the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA); the American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators (AANAC); the National Rural Health Association (NRHA); the American Association of Nurse Executives (AANEX); the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA); the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA); the American Society of Health Care Administration Executives (ASHCAE); the American Health Care Association (AHCA); the American Health Quality Association (AHQA); the National Association for the Support of Long Term Care (NASL); the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA); the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care; the Coalition of Women in Long Term Care (COWL); and the Nurse Executive Council.