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Contact: Dan Virkstis  
(202) 224-4515

## **FINANCE BRINGS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, MEDICAID SAFEGUARDS TO 2008 SENATE SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING BILL**

*Baucus urges passage of bipartisan provisions for America as  
funding bill moves to Senate floor*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today urged passage of key Finance provisions in the domestic spending portion of the 2008 supplemental funding bill, including measures that would extend unemployment insurance (UI) for America’s workers and that would safeguard Medicaid services for millions of low-income Americans. The Senate Finance Committee put forward similar UI provisions in late January as part of the economic stimulus package, and Baucus has been vocal in his opposition to stringent Medicaid regulations issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to reduce federal funding to the Medicaid program.

**“These provisions in the supplemental spending bill target some of today’s most urgent domestic issues by providing additional assistance to those Americans who have lost their jobs during this tough economic time, and by protecting Medicaid coverage for millions who face being shut out of our health care system,”** said Baucus. **“I urge my colleagues in the Senate to do what’s right for America’s working families, and move these provisions in our supplemental funding bill.”**

The UI provision would make 13 weeks of additional UI benefits available to jobless Americans through the end of March 2009. Americans in high unemployment states – with total unemployment rates of six percent or higher – would have 13 additional weeks of eligibility for a total of 26 additional weeks. Individuals who have begun to receive either 13-week extension of benefits by the end of March would be eligible to receive benefits for the remainder of that 13 weeks.

One provision related to Medicaid would suspend until April 1, 2009, seven regulations issued by HHS to reduce federal funding to the Medicaid program by nearly \$20 billion, cutting millions of vulnerable Americans out of the health care system. Specifically, the proposed rules would force cuts in school-based, rehabilitation, and case management services, and limit the ability of states to impose taxes on health care providers. They would also change the definition of public provider, the definition of outpatient services, the policy on intergovernmental transfers, and eliminate payment for graduate medical education. These rules would shift millions of dollars in health care costs to state and local governments at a time when they are already under tremendous financial pressure. The National Governors’ Association has asked Congress to block these proposed regulations.

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