

## **STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN GORDON H. SMITH**

U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging  
Medicaid Roundtable “Securing Medicaid’s Future: Spotlight on Managed Care”  
September 13, 2006

Welcome and thank you all for agreeing to participate in today’s Medicaid roundtable.

Today I am hosting the first in a series of roundtable discussions focused on developing solutions to secure the future of Medicaid. Medicaid is a vitally important program for our nation’s poor, elderly and disabled. However, in recent years some people have taken steps that I believe threaten the program and put vulnerable populations in danger.

Unfortunately, the program is not sustainable in its current form. Created in 1965, improvements are necessary to ensure that states can utilize the innovations to health care that the past four decades have brought. I am encouraged that those who join me today also are focused on improving the program and are open to new and possibly unique ideas to ensure that Medicaid benefits will be intact for the next forty years.

With that, I will take a few minutes to outline the format for this morning. Each participant will have five minutes to present their perspective on utilization of Medicaid managed care for high-need, high-cost populations, such as dual eligibles and persons with disabilities and multiple chronic conditions. Once all of the participants have spoken, each Member will get five minutes to question the panel. We will have as many rounds of questions as necessary.

I have chosen to conduct these meetings as roundtables because it is my hope that today’s discussion will take the form of an open dialogue. All of our participants are experts in their area of Medicaid so I encourage all of you to share your insight with us. Today’s discussion is just the starting point. I want to invite all of you to work with my staff in the coming months to develop a legislative proposal that will encourage states to expand managed care into these new populations, while also ensuring the necessary safeguards are in place.

Thank you again for coming today, and I look forward to hearing your testimony. With that, I will turn to my colleague Senator Kohl.