

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



RANKING MEMBER *Special Committee on Aging*

Sen. Casey's Opening Statement Hearing on Patient-Focused Care: A Prescription to Reduce Health Care Costs October 3, 2018

“Thank you, Chairman Collins, for holding this hearing today.

“Every American will interact with our health care system. We owe every citizen a system that ensures they can afford the care they need, no matter what illness or accident that they will endure. We owe taxpayers a system that guarantees federal dollars are spent wisely and efficiently. We owe health care providers a payment system that allows them to focus on what matters most: patient care.

“The Affordable Care Act provides individuals, families, taxpayers and providers all of these benefits. It expanded coverage to 20 million Americans. It provides key consumer protections, like protections against being denied coverage or charged more for coverage due to a pre-existing condition. It invests in proven reforms to our health care delivery system and updated payment models so that providers and patients can work together as partners in shaping their care. These are key improvements to health care in America, enhancing care and reducing costs for patients, providers and health care systems alike.

“The Affordable Care Act is not perfect and we have more work to do to lower costs—just by way of one example.

“Recently, the Administration refused to defend the Affordable Care Act's protections for people with pre-existing conditions in a lawsuit brought by 20 Republican-led states.

“Each of us is one accident or illness away from joining the millions of Americans with a pre-existing condition. In Pennsylvania, that number is 5.3 million people with a pre-existing condition. Chairman Collins and I agree that we must keep our promise to Americans with pre-existing conditions while working to improve care quality and lower costs.

“Congress made a commitment to payment innovation in the Affordable Care Act, as well. The law expanded an important program called Money Follows the Person. It makes it possible for seniors and people with disabilities to receive the care they need in the very place they most want to be—at home and among those in their community. Alongside Chairman Collins, I am a proud cosponsor of legislation to extend this essential program. Congress should act to continue Money Follows the Person before the year's end.

“Today, the committee will discuss ways to build upon improvements like Money Follows the Person and others programs made possible by the Affordable Care Act. This is an important conversation.

“I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about how we can preserve everything from the coverage protections to the innovative programs included in the Affordable Care Act, but also what more we can do to make our health care system even stronger.

“Thank you, and I look forward to today’s discussion.”

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