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For Immediate Release
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RetireSafe to House: Stop Proposed Rationing of High-Quality Hospital Care – Medicare Needs More Physician Hospitals!

Washington, DC (November 4, 2009) Today RetireSafe, representing 400,000 senior citizen supporters across America, called on the U.S. House of Representatives to stop the proposed rationing of high-quality hospital care to Medicare patients. “The health care reform bill soon to be considered by the House would deny Medicare beneficiaries access to the best in hospital care by limiting the operation and growth of physician hospitals,” charged RetireSafe President Thair Phillips. For seniors seeking the finest in orthopedic or cardiac care, physician hospitals are an obvious first choice,” Phillips said. “This outrage must not be allowed to stand,” he added.

“We need more of these outstanding facilities to serve the growing millions of older Americans on Medicare,” Phillips emphasized. “The House Majority reform bill would deny our seniors access to new physician hospitals, and put the ones we now have out of business,” he added. “Clearly the House should act now to strike the physician hospital limitation language from the health care reform bill,” Phillips stressed.

He continued, “Physician hospitals offer the best in patient care, and rate far higher than most of the big chain and so-called ‘community’ hospitals they compete against.” “Study after study proves that the smaller physician hospitals provide a higher nurse to patient ratio, more physician control of hospital operations, and minimal patient disruption during recovery, Phillips noted.

“A recent (August 2009) *Consumer Reports* study involving more than one million hospital patients nationwide, ranked physician hospitals as the number one hospital in 19 states, and near the top in the other states in which they operate,” he pointed out. “One federally mandated quality study done by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) showed that patients rated physician hospitals 37 points higher than the national average, while another federal study of physician hospitals found the length of stay was anywhere from 17 percent to 31 percent shorter at specialty hospitals than at their community counterparts,” he stated. (More detailed information on hospital quality studies can be found at consumerreports.org or in the paper “Why America Needs *More* Physicians Hospitals” at seniorsforcures.org.) Phillips concluded, “Responsible Members of the House must stand up for better care, and oppose the rationing of Medicare hospital benefits at physician hospitals.”

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