

## News Release

For immediate release

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# **American Diabetes Association Strongly Supports Recently-Introduced Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Savings Act**

*ADA lauds Sens. Schumer and Domenici for introducing legislation to ensure diabetes management services and screening through Medicaid*

Alexandria, VA (March 5, 2007) – The American Diabetes Association (ADA) endorsed the Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Savings Act, which was introduced in the U.S. Senate on Friday by Sens. Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Pete Domenici (R-NM). The bill aims to prevent type 2 diabetes and diabetes complications among the Medicaid population by providing screening tests under the Medicaid program for adult enrollees with diabetes risk factors. The legislation would also ensure that states offer a comprehensive package of benefits needed to properly manage diabetes care. This would include prescription drug coverage, durable medical equipment, services related to pregnancy, vision care, podiatry, education and self-management training, and nutrition services. Nearly 21 million American children and adults have diabetes, but only two-thirds have been diagnosed. Another 54 million have pre-diabetes. Approximately 15 percent of people with diabetes are in the Medicaid program; many more remain undiagnosed.

“Diabetes has become the greatest public health crisis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” said Larry Deeb, MD, President of Medicine & Science, American Diabetes Association. “With more and more Americans at risk for diabetes – especially among our nation’s poor and most vulnerable – we need to make sure we are doing a better job of diagnosing those at risk and ensuring that they have the necessary tools to manage the disease. This is not being done sufficiently today. If we don’t address this issue, we will be setting our health care system up for failure.”

While diabetes is a manageable disease, an individual’s ability to effectively manage it is directly connected to his or her ability to access and utilize appropriate health care –from primary prevention to secondary and tertiary prevention. Without access to diabetes medications, equipment, and educational training, people with diabetes are at a much greater risk for diabetes-related complications such as blindness, kidney failure, and amputations. Yet these services, including screening and early interventions, vary by state, with some states providing more comprehensive coverage and other states offering merely catastrophic coverage with the onset of diabetes complications.

**-more-**

**National Office**

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**Diabetes Information**

call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383)  
online [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)  
The Association gratefully accepts gifts through your will.

**The Mission** of the American

Diabetes Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

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## **American Diabetes Association/Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Services Act, Page 2**

In 2002, the U.S. spent \$132 billion on diabetes and its complications. Today, one in ten health care dollars is directed toward diabetes. A 2005 study by the American Diabetes Association and the Georgetown University Health Policy Institute found that health care costs for a person with diabetes totals approximately \$13,243 per year, compared to \$2,560 for individuals without diabetes. However, for every dollar invested in diabetes training and education, health care costs can be reduced by up to \$8.76, according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Savings Act would combat the rising health care costs associated with diabetes by increasing prevention, early detection, and management services.

“The American Diabetes Association is committed to fighting the diabetes epidemic, but we need more allies if we are to be successful,” Deeb said. “That is why we are so appreciative of the leadership and dedication of Senators Schumer and Domenici to pass this important legislation.”

The American Diabetes Association is the nation’s leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy. The Association’s advocacy efforts include helping to combat discrimination against people with diabetes; advocating for the increase of federal diabetes research and programs; and improved access to, and quality of, healthcare for people with diabetes. The Association’s mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. Founded in 1940, the Association provides service to hundreds of communities across the country. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.

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