Cardin, Blunt Team Up to Fight for Chronic Kidney Disease Patients

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Washington, DC – May 30, 2019 -  U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-Md.) and Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) have announced legislation designed to increase access to services for chronic kidney disease patients. The Chronic Kidney Disease Improvement in Research and Treatment Act (S.1676) builds on previous legislation from the lawmakers by enhancing care through new technologies; improving access to treatment and specialists for underserved areas; guaranteeing access to Medigap policies to all ESRD beneficiaries, regardless of age; and increasing research on kidney transplants and the use of palliative care on the quality of treatment outcomes for End State Renal Disease (ESRD) -- the last stage of chronic kidney disease.

“New technologies are changing outcomes for chronic kidney disease patients, but those treatments are out of reach physically and financially for too many in this country. We can do better and, in the process, save lives and improve quality of life for millions,” said Senator Cardin.

“Expanding access to new treatments and specialty care for patients living with chronic kidney disease will have a major impact on their health and quality of life,” said Senator Blunt. “This is a disease that affects millions of Americans, and this bill will help ensure they get the care they need.”

Kidney disease is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, today, 14 percent of Americans suffer from some form of kidney disease, and more than 661,000 Americans are living with kidney failure or end-stage renal disease (ESRD) – an irreversible condition that is fatal without a kidney transplant or life-sustaining dialysis. ESRD is 3.7 times greater in African Americans, 1.4 times greater in Native Americans and 1.5 times greater in Asian Americans than white Americans.

The full text of the Chronic Kidney Disease Improvement in Research and Treatment Act (S.1676) can be downloaded here.

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