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## HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

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Senior citizens and other beneficiaries, the majority of whom are on limited and fixed incomes, depend on essential health care services provided by Medicare and Medicaid programs. Senator Akaka has worked hard to strengthen these programs to ensure access to and affordability of needed medical care. That is why he has called for repeal of the requirement for residents applying or reapplying for Medicaid to produce a passport or birth certificate to prove they are U.S. citizens. An estimated 51 million people will be affected by these unworkable documentation requirements when they apply or reapply for Medicaid.

He lobbied and voted for legislation to establish a comprehensive Medicare prescription drug benefit. When the 2003 Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act falsely promised seniors it would make prescription drugs more affordable, he voted against it. Under the measure, prescription drug benefits will not provide sufficient drug coverage and many seniors will be worse off under the law.

In addition, the Senator is committed to making substantial improvements in Medicare prescription drug benefits so that seniors are able to afford essential medication. He worked to protect \$21.6 billion intended for Medicaid and the Earned Income Tax Credit benefits from being diverted for additional tax cuts in the FY 2005 Budget Resolution. He has also sponsored legislation to increase the Medicare reimbursement rate for Pap smear laboratory tests to ensure that the test remains available and reasonably priced for all women.

To provide much needed help to struggling families, Senator Akaka successfully amended the Welfare-to-Work program to increase the number of welfare recipients and non-custodial parents eligible for job training, search, creation and retention services to foster self-sufficiency.