Legislation for Separate Benefit Category for Complex Rehab Technology Reintroduced

Congressmen Joe Crowley and Jim Sensenbrenner Join In Bipartisan Reintroduction

March 5, 2013- The Separate Benefit Category (SBC) Steering Committee is pleased to announce the bipartisan reintroduction of congressional legislation. Congressman Joe Crowley (D-NY) and Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) have jointly sponsored House Bill H.R. 942 the “Ensuring Access To Quality Complex Rehabilitation Technology Act of 2013”.

H.R. 942 creates a separate benefit category for Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) within the Medicare program so that adequate access to these critical products and supporting services can be assured. The legislation appropriately distinguishes these specialized products and makes other required changes to better address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and medical conditions who require CRT products and related services.

Congressman Crowley is a member of Democratic House Leadership serving as Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus. He also is a member of the House Ways & Means Committee, the House committee with primary jurisdiction over Medicare. This new bill is a follow up to original legislation introduced by Congressman Crowley in April 2012. That bill finished the year with 38 co-sponsors.

Congressman Sensenbrenner is a senior House Republican, serving since 1978, with a proven history of supporting legislation and activities for people with disabilities. He was an original co-sponsor of the American With Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 where he teamed up with then majority leader Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) in a bipartisan effort. In 2011, he and his wife Cheryl were awarded the Spirit of the ADA Award given by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Cheryl Sensenbrenner also has a long record of advocacy leadership, including serving both as a Board member and as past Board Chair for AAPD.

The SBC initiative has garnered broad support from the consumer and clinical communities. Over 40 national groups have signed on in support of the legislation and its objectives. The list includes the ALS Association, American Association of People with Disabilities, National Council on Independent Living, Paralyzed Veterans of America, United Spinal Association, American Association of Occupational Therapists, American Association of Physical Therapists, and the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Now that the legislation has been reintroduced, CRT stakeholders will build on the progress made in Congress last year. That resulted in strong bipartisan support from 39 House Members, including 13 members from the key House Ways & Means and Energy & Commerce Committees. The group also included the Republican and Democrat Co-Chairs of the House Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus.

Additional details will be forthcoming as the SBC Steering Committee updates its advocacy tools and materials for 2013. For more information on the Separate Benefit Category for Complex Rehab Technology visit www.access2crt.org or contact Don Clayback, Steering Committee Chair, at dclayback@ncart.us or 716-839-9728.