

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 15, 2011

Dear Colleague:

The Medicare program continues to present an enormous fiscal challenge for our country. In the coming years, the aging population will put further pressure on the Medicare program, and we believe the use of telehealth technology could be one solution to help alleviate some of this budgetary pressure.

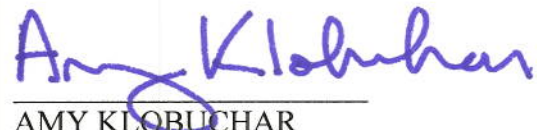
Telehealth technology uses telecommunications and information technologies to provide health care services at a distance. It has the ability to give individuals in underserved areas access to specialists and other health care providers through the use of cutting edge technologies. Remote monitoring, a form of telehealth, uses non-invasive sensors to monitor the health and well-being of seniors in their home and can prevent premature or unnecessary placements in more expensive types of long term care facilities.

On March 8th, 2011, we reintroduced the Fostering Independence Through Technology (FITT) Act, S. 501. This bipartisan, budget neutral legislation would establish a pilot project under the Medicare program to provide incentives for home health agencies to utilize home monitoring and communications technologies. We believe that using this type of technology in the home would reduce the number of visits by home health aides and allow individuals to remain in their homes longer while still providing quality care.

Please join us by cosponsoring the Fostering Independence Through Technology (FITT) Act. This legislation brings the practice of telehealth and improved access to health care services to individuals who want to continue to live independently. For additional information or to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Jane Tschetter with Senator Thune at 224-2321 or Andrew Hu with Senator Klobuchar at 224-3244.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN THUNE  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
AMY KLOBUCHAR  
United States Senator