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CONTACT: Miguel A. Ayala
(202) 374-1098

Congresswoman Schakowsky Reintroduces The Lymphedema Treatment Act *Bill Ensures Treatment Is Covered for Medicare Recipients*

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), a Senior Chief Deputy Whip, was joined by Reps. Buddy Carter (GA-01), Earl Blumenauer (OR-03) and Mike Kelly (PA-16) in reintroducing The Lymphedema Treatment Act, with 90 original co-sponsors. The legislation ensures that Medicare Part B covers compression garments, the clinically-recognized treatment for lymphedema. This illness, characterized by swelling and discomfort, is often seen in patients undergoing cancer treatment and affects anywhere from 1.5 to 3 million current Medicare beneficiaries and almost 10 million people nationwide.

“I have seen Lymphedema in a close friend of mine, so I know that it can be a painful and costly condition to treat and manage on top of struggling with cancer,” said **Congresswoman Schakowsky**. “This bipartisan legislation will make sure that those dealing with it don’t have to also worry about the cost of treating it. I am proud to reintroduce the Lymphedema Treatment Act with almost 100 of my colleagues and hope that we will finally pass this critical legislation in the 116th Congress.”

“This legislation is critical to ensure Lymphedema patients have access to the compression therapy products they need,” said **Congressman Carter**. “The current lack of coverage could result in major health and financial challenges for Medicare beneficiaries living with Lymphedema. I hope this bipartisan bill will move quickly through Congress to address this issue.”

“The Lymphedema Treatment Act would ensure Americans suffering from lymphedema have access to the compression treatment that best manages their condition and alleviates needless suffering,” said **Rep. Blumenauer**. “This bipartisan legislation would reduce the financial burden of treatment, so that lymphedema patients and their loved ones can focus on care.”

Congressman Kelly said, “Many seniors in Western Pennsylvania are affected by lymphedema. Preventative medicine is crucial to keep Americans healthy and seniors deserve Medicare coverage of doctor-prescribed supplies to treat this condition. I am proud to be a co-author of this legislation.”

This bill enjoys strong support from a broad coalition of patient advocacy, health provider and health industry groups, including the Lymphedema Advocacy Group, the American Cancer Society, the American Medical Association, the Lymphatic Education and Research Network, 3M, the Oncology Nursing Society, the American Physical Therapy Association, and the American Occupational Therapy Association.

“The Lymphedema Treatment Act will ensure that Medicare beneficiaries have the necessary doctor-prescribed medical supplies to manage this chronic and potentially debilitating condition. We are grateful to Representative Schakowsky, Representative Carter, Representative Blumenauer, Representative Kelly, and all of the bill co-sponsors for their efforts to help the millions of Americans living with lymphedema maintain their health and quality of life,” said **Heather Ferguson, founder and executive director of the Lymphedema Advocacy Group.**

“On behalf of millions of cancer patients, survivors and their families, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) commends the reintroduction of the Lymphedema Treatment Act. Lymphedema affects millions of Americans and patient access to medical supplies that help treat this disease and improve quality of life is imperative. We look forward to working with Congress to advance this legislation and make sure Medicare covers all necessary medical supplies for the treatment of lymphedema,” said **Lisa A. Lacasse, President, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.**

Laura Fennimore RN, DNP, NEA-BC, President of the Oncology Nursing Society, stated, “Enabling Medicare to cover lymphedema compression supplies will improve quality of life for patients suffering from the painful side effects of cancer. ‘The Lymphedema Act’ will empower oncology nurses who manage treatment of side effects to be more effective caregivers and ultimately will result in more successful outcome for patients with cancer nationwide.”

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