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Contact: Leigh Ann Bradley (703) 548-0019

**National Patient Advocate Foundation Hails Senator Rockefeller,
Representative Courtney for Introducing Preexisting Conditions Bill,
Ensuring Patient Access to Health Coverage**

Rockefeller-Courtney Bill Will End Insurance Coverage Exclusions for Preexisting Conditions

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 17, 2009) – The National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) – a national, non-profit organization dedicated to the mission of creating avenues of improved patient access to health care through public policy reform at the state and federal levels – today praised Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT) for introducing the “Preexisting Condition Exclusion Patient Protection Act of 2009” which will protect Americans at risk of being denied health insurance coverage as a result of preexisting conditions.

“Because of gaps in current law, many Americans suffering from chronic, disabling, and life-threatening conditions either have no health insurance coverage or are continuously at risk of losing the coverage they have,” said Nancy Davenport-Ennis, President and CEO of NPAF. “Closing these gaps is a central component of NPAF’s ongoing initiative to end preexisting condition exclusions, and we applaud and thank Senator Rockefeller and Representative Courtney for their leadership on this important issue.”

The “Preexisting Condition Exclusion Patient Protection Act of 2009” amends provisions in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) that currently allow patients to be denied health insurance coverage. Davenport-Ennis called the legislation “an important step in the fight to eradicate preexisting condition exclusions from the private insurance market.” Davenport-Ennis said, “NPAF is proud to join Senator Rockefeller and Representative Courtney in taking up the cause of the millions of Americans with chronic illness and little or no access to health insurance. We stand ready to support the sponsors in any way that we can to assure passage of this landmark legislation.”

NPAF is the companion organization of the Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF), which was founded on the principle that health care is a basic human need and shared social responsibility. NPAF is dedicated to working collectively with the Administration, Congress, and all levels of government to overcome challenges and create solutions that will allow for affordable, high-quality, and effective healthcare for all. PAF services are available to all patients, patient families, and medical professionals and offer a variety of patient assistance programs including insurance claims intervention, job retention services, and medical debt crisis management.

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