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## **With Kick-Off of Congressional “Super Committee” Meeting in DC, THCA Urges Rep. Hensarling To Protect Quality Nursing Home Care, Front Line Care Jobs**

*Texas Nursing Home Advocates Encourage Co-Chairman Hensarling to Maintain Adequate Medicare and Medicaid Funding for Preservation of Quality Care, Key Caregiver Jobs*

**AUSTIN, TX** – The Texas Health Care Association (THCA) today praised the 12 bipartisan U.S. House and Senate members of the Congressional “super committee” for convening their initial meeting in Washington, and urged committee co-chairman Jeb. Hensarling (R-TX) and his colleagues to protect quality nursing home care and key caregiving jobs as they focus on Medicare and Medicaid funding matters in the months ahead.

“We are encouraged by the super committee holding its first meeting today, and optimistic about the development of sensible recommendations that lower our nation’s deficit while still protecting quality nursing home care for Texas seniors,” said Tim Graves, President of THCA. “Congressman Hensarling has a key position in this special panel, and we encourage them to work in partnership to generate ideas to lower spending while maintaining the provision of important health care services for our most vulnerable frail, elderly citizens. To do so, we urge them to protect Texas seniors by opposing additional cuts to nursing home care.”

Graves noted that Texas is especially challenged by chronic Medicare and Medicaid underfunding that has put the continued provision of quality nursing home care at risk in many local communities. Recent funding challenges include Medicaid nursing home cuts of \$58 million enacted this year and federal Medicare cuts of \$1.6 billion over ten years implemented as part of health care reform and other regulatory changes. In addition, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has reduced Medicare nursing home funding in Texas by \$234 million – a 10.4% rate reduction for 2012 – at a time when nursing homes are experiencing rising costs of care as residents are requiring additional complex and acute care services.

“As we strive to provide highest quality care for Texas’ seniors and continue to employ the dedicated men and women who help us deliver this care, we are committed to making sure that Rep. Hensarling and the super committee members are informed about the crucial need for stable nursing home care funding,” said Graves. “We offer ourselves as an information source to the committee as they weigh funding options and take into account the impact that Medicare or Medicaid cuts would have on nursing home care programs, front-line jobs and local economies in Texas and across the nation.”

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