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Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District highlighted two new reports that were recently released on the impact that the Affordable Care Act is having on New Mexico’s seniors as well as the effect it will have on the deficit.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released data showing that health insurance reform has already saved New Mexico seniors on Medicare \$18,751,250 on prescription drugs. A report from the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) found that the Affordable Health Care act will reduce the deficit by \$109 billion over ten years.

“Thirty-three times House Republicans have voted to repeal the health care law. Thirty-three times House Republicans have voted to increase the deficit and force seniors to pay more for their prescription drugs,” Congressman Luján said. “In addition to the many other benefits – such as ending discrimination for pre-existing conditions and allowing young adults to stay on their parents’ health care plan until age 26 – these reports make it clear that the people of New Mexico have much to gain through the Affordable Care Act and that they have already have more money in their pockets thanks to lower prescription drug costs. For seniors on a fixed budget, saving hundreds of dollars on life-saving medication will have a significant impact during this tough economic time.”

Key provisions in the Affordable Care Act addressed the rising costs of prescription drugs for seniors on Medicare. The law has already helped seniors who hit the Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage gap or “donut hole.” In 2010, people with Medicare who hit the donut hole received a one-time \$250 rebate, totaling more than \$5 million for seniors in New Mexico. In 2011, people with Medicare began receiving a 50 percent discount on covered brand name drugs and 7 percent coverage of generic drugs in the donut hole. Last year, more than 19,000 Medicare beneficiaries in New Mexico received \$9.7 million in discounts, saving the average beneficiary \$497. This year, Medicare coverage for generic drugs in the coverage gap has increased to 14 percent, already saving seniors \$4 million.

The CBO’s findings, released on Tuesday, make it clear that efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act will significantly add to the deficit. While the law will save \$109 billion over the next ten years, CBO also found that the Affordable Care Act will reduce the deficit by roughly \$1.5

trillion in the second decade.

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