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NAM PRAISES AGREEMENT BY MEDICARE CONFEREES

Trautwein Celebrates "Triumph of Reason over 'Medi-Scare' Tactics"

Washington, D.C., November 17, 2003 - The National Association of Manufacturers today applauded House and Senate conferees for reaching agreement on a final Medicare reform plan that provides for prescription drug coverage and substantial changes to modernize the Medicare program.

"This agreement is fantastic news," said NAM health policy expert Neil Trautwein. "We are finally ready to move forward with the Medicare reforms that we and so many others have sought for so long."

Trautwein called the agreement "both a big step toward affordable prescription drug coverage and a giant leap forward toward greater security for present and future Medicare beneficiaries. This is a big win for us all - a triumph of reason over 'Medi-scare' tactics."

Vowing to work vigorously to help pass the agreement through both houses of Congress, Trautwein thanked the conferees for their hard work, and President Bush for his steadfast support of Medicare reform. "This is a tremendous breakthrough, but we're not out of the woods yet," Trautwein said. "We're a lot closer than we were at the end of last week, and we are ready to carry this over the last, hardest mile in the House and Senate."

The National Association of Manufacturers is the nation's largest industrial trade association. The NAM represents 14,000 members (including 10,000 small and mid-sized companies) and 350 member associations serving manufacturers and employees in every industrial sector and all 50 states. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the NAM has 10 additional offices across the country.

The NAM's mission is to enhance the competitiveness of manufacturers and improve American living standards by shaping a legislative and regulatory environment conducive to U.S. economic growth, and to increase understanding among policymakers, the media and the general public about the importance of manufacturing to America's economic strength.

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