

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Lee Terry (R-NE), who has been a champion of the home care industry for many years, along with co-author Workforce Protections Subcommittee Chairman Tim Walberg, of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, today introduced the Walberg-Terry Ensuring Access to Affordable and Quality Companion Care Act.

Under current law, the scope of the companionship exemption is undefined. This vague language has allowed the current Secretary of Labor in December 2011 to issue a proposed rule to narrow the scope of the exemption, which would affect the affordability and access of this beneficial service to thousands of families. Instead of impacting the home care industry, our legislation adds clarity and clearly defines "companionship services" as including third party non-medical in-home care.

Additionally, Congressman Terry co-sponsored the Protecting In-Home Care from Government Intrusion Act to prevent the Secretary of Labor from finalizing or enforcing the proposed rule.

**"Home care companions provide a level of comfort and attention to seniors and the disabled that they may not necessarily receive in a hospital. Instead, these seniors can remain in their homes during a very difficult and strenuous time. Seniors have a healthier outlook and have shown improvement while under their consistent and personal care," Terry said. "Companionship is an affordable alternative for seniors who wish to avoid the high cost of institutional care."**

**"I am extremely disappointed that the Department of Labor is using the well-being of our nation's seniors to make a power grab by attempting to regulate overnight companion care," continued Terry. "Instead of regulating, we should continue to promote the health and cost benefits associated with in-home companionship. These companions have been a blessing to seniors, the disabled and home-bound."**