

Washington, DC---Continuing their fight to promote the health, safety, and well-being of seniors and address the epidemic of diabetes and pre-diabetes in Medicare, U.S. Reps. Zack Space (D-OH) and Lee Terry (R-NE) today introduced legislation that encourages seniors to take advantage of free diabetes screening benefit currently offered under Medicare.

**"We can help our seniors prevent and delay the high cost and complications that come with diabetes," said Congressman Space. "Getting our seniors screened for this illness, and making sure that they know they can do it for free will be a crucial first step toward tackling this devastating epidemic."**

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**"Because diabetes is a serious and debilitating chronic illness it is critical that seniors be diagnosed and treated properly," said Congressman Terry. "Many seniors, especially those on fixed incomes, do not get the adequate care they need. This important legislation will provide much needed outreach to our senior population to ensure they get the screening and therapy they need."**

Currently only about 11% of seniors are using the free screening benefit offered under Medicare. One-third of those aged 65 and older have diabetes and half of them are unaware that they suffer from the illness. While prevention of costly complications of diabetes is possible, early diagnosis is absolutely imperative to successful management of the disease.

The Space-Terry legislation would evaluate why utilization of the free benefit is so low and would conduct a public-private outreach to providers and patients to increase use of the existing benefit. Previously, provisions of the bill were included in H.R. 1402, which had 62 bipartisan cosponsors.

