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***CARDIN CALLS SENATE PASSAGE OF FY2010 BUDGET AN
IMPORTANT STEP IN SETTING A NEW DIRECTION
FOR OUR NATION***

WASHINGTON – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD), a member of the Senate Budget Committee, today praised Senate passage of the FY 2010 Budget Resolution, saying *“this budget is an investment in our nation’s future that will set important new priorities including cutting our dependence on foreign energy, tackling rising health care cost and improving our schools.”*

Last night, the Senate voted 55-43 to approve the FY 2010 Budget Resolution, which included several important amendments co-sponsored by Senator Cardin. The first, which was also co-sponsored by **Senator John Ensign** (R-NV), would create a reserve fund making it easier to ultimately eliminate the arbitrary caps on Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy services performed outside a hospital setting. The caps were first enacted in 1997.

The Budget Resolution also included a Cardin amendment that would increase the funding level for the Small Business Administration (SBA) by \$180 million to \$880 million for FY 2010. The Senator, who also is a member of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, said this increase was critical because: *“The SBA has suffered severe budget cutbacks over the past eight years, and it’s time that we ensure the agency has the resources it needs to provide small businesses with the financial and technical assistance they need to weather these difficult economic times.”*

Senator Cardin also co-sponsored an amendment that would speed funding for completion of the FDA campus at White Oak. The project, which is expected to be completed by 2012, will consolidate FDA facilities on one campus and will house approximately 9,000 workers.”

Senator Cardin, who also chairs the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee of the Environment and Public Works Committee, also co-sponsored an amendment incorporating protections for oceans and coastal areas, including the Great Lakes, into a deficit-neutral reserve fund to support increased investment in renewable energy, green jobs and environmental preservation.

“The FY 2010 Budget Resolution builds on the investments we have already made in the Omnibus Appropriations Act and in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It provides a blueprint for strengthening our economy, investing in America and reversing the disastrous policies of the past eight years. It protects the major priorities in President Obama’s budget and defines our key spending initiatives for the coming year. The budget lays the foundation for fixing our broken health care system, eliminating our dependence on foreign energy, and improving our schools, while also reducing the burgeoning deficit that President Obama inherited.”

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