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Montgomery Hospice honors Congressman Chris Van Hollen

ROCKVILLE, March 20, 2009 – Congressman Chris Van Hollen was honored as a "Hospice Hero" at Montgomery Hospice's twenty-first annual gala. Ann Mitchell, President & CEO of Montgomery Hospice, praised Congressman Van Hollen's "long-time commitment, dedicated service to and crucial support of Hospice Care." Montgomery Hospice and hospices nationwide are grateful to Congressman Van Hollen for his ongoing support of the seriously ill members of our community.

In response to a federal regulation that reduced Medicare reimbursement for hospice programs, Congressman Van Hollen introduced legislation last September that would help preserve Medicare beneficiaries' access to hospice services. The recently-enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act included a provision Congressman Van Hollen championed for that reverses cuts to Medicare hospice reimbursements. The provision places a one-year moratorium on the Medicare hospice regulation for Fiscal Year 2009 and ensures that hospices continue to receive the same reimbursement rate for wages. "Hospices provide high quality, compassionate and cost-effective care to terminally ill patients in communities across the country," stated Congressman Van Hollen. "As our nation faces the continuing challenges of meeting the health care needs of an aging population, now is not the time to cut back on Medicare reimbursement for hospice services. For patients and their families, as well as for health care reform, hospice is part of the solution."

Congressman Van Hollen represents Maryland's 8th district and is in his third term serving Montgomery County. He is Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and serves as Assistant to the Speaker of the House. In addition, Congressman Van Hollen serves on the House Ways and Means Committee and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Before being elected to Congress, Congressman Van Hollen served 12 years in the Maryland General Assembly.

Montgomery Hospice is the largest medical hospice in Montgomery County, Maryland and has been serving the community for more than 27 years. In 2008 Montgomery Hospice served more than 1400 patients and supported more than 5600 county residents with bereavement services.

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