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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care Statement on the President's State of the Union Address

Washington, DC – Alan G. Rosenbloom, President of the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care, issued the following statement prior to President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address:

"Since government pays for the nursing home care of three out of four Americans through the Medicare and Medicaid programs, we strongly urge President Bush to focus on ensuring these programs, vital to seniors' current and future long term care needs, are adequately financed in the face of growing demand and increased utilization. Indeed, health care funding remains an important stimulus to the economy, particularly with respect to nursing homes, which are labor-intensive. Medicare and Medicaid funding for nursing homes, therefore, can have a significant multiplier effect that can help respond to the nation's current economic downturn."

"More importantly, working with the President, and with the U.S. Congress, America's nursing homes have engaged successfully in a variety of joint federal-provider quality improvement initiatives - efforts which continue today. To continue moving forward, it will be essential for the Administration to accurately evaluate both Medicare and Medicaid in developing the nation's long term care funding policy. In so doing, this will ensure every American, from every walk of life, will have access now and in the future to the quality care they deserve and many will eventually need."

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The American Health Care Association (AHCA) and National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) represents nearly 11,000 non-profit and proprietary facilities dedicated to continuous improvement in the delivery of professional and compassionate care provided daily by millions of caring employees to 1.5 million of our nation's frail, elderly and disabled citizens who live in nursing facilities, assisted living residences, subacute centers and homes for persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. For more information, please visit www.ahca.org.

The Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care ("The Alliance") is a coalition of 16 national long term care provider organizations that care for approximately 300,000 elderly and disabled patients each year in nearly 1,800 facilities across America. The Alliance is dedicated to improving the quality of nursing home care in the United States through measured results and outcomes and to assuring the government resources necessary to provide high quality care and services.