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Statement by President of Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care On Legislation Introduced Today in U.S. Senate

Washington, DC – The following is a statement by Alan G. Rosenbloom, President of the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care addressing the “Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act of 2008,” introduced today by U.S. Senators Herb Kohl (D-WI) and Charles Grassley (R-IA).

“The Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care commends Senators Kohl and Grassley for their longstanding and continuing commitment to nursing home quality improvement, a commitment reflected in today’s introduction of the Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act. Appropriate standards regarding transparency and accountability, as well as more accurate information upon which to build meaningful quality metrics, are important to continuing the noteworthy improvements in nursing home care that have been achieved in recent years.

“America’s nursing homes have led efforts in the health care sector to develop and disclose key quality data to consumers and also have demonstrated a consistent commitment to quality improvement. The current “Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes” campaign, a collaboration among consumers, direct care workers, licensed professionals, nursing homes and the federal government, is the most recent example.

“We hope to work closely and cooperatively with Senators Kohl and Grassley to strengthen some provisions of their legislation, which we believe would benefit from provider input. For example, while the Alliance strongly supports the pilot study on staffing proposed in the bill, we believe that the pilot study should address not only nursing personnel, but also other direct care givers - - therapists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other physician extenders - - who increasingly are providing care to nursing home patients.

“We look forward to engagement with all stakeholders as this bill proceeds through the legislative process.”

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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.