

House OKs delay on doc pay cut

Posted: November 29, 2010 - 3:00 pm ET

By a unanimous voice vote, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to stave off a 23% Medicare payment cut to physicians that was scheduled for Dec. 1.

After about 40 minutes of debate, House leaders approved Senate amendments to a bill that provides certain clarifications and extensions under the Medicare, Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program. A week before the Thanksgiving recess, the Senate voted to delay the cut after Senate Finance Committee Co-Chairmen Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) had introduced the bill and also said they would work for a more permanent solution.

The legislation still requires the president's signature to become law.

"While this short-term delay helps ensure that physicians can continue to care for seniors for the next month, congressional action early in December to stop the cut for one year will inject stability into the Medicare program and ensure that Medicare delivers on its promise of health coverage for America's seniors," Cecil Wilson, a physician who serves as president of the American Medical Association, said in a statement. "It is crucial that Congress act well before the January 1 deadline so there are no disruptions in care for seniors."