



Al Franken

U.S. Senator for Minnesota

Working for Minnesota's Medical Device Community

Senator Franken knows that Minnesota's medical device industry is critical to the state's economy, with more than 350 device companies supporting more than 30,000 high-value jobs. For years, Sen. Franken has fought tirelessly against a burdensome tax that harms the industry. He has also used his position on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to support Minnesota's medical device industry and to advance its priorities. Because this industry relies on the ability to bring cutting-edge products to consumers quickly and safely, Sen. Franken has worked to streamline key FDA processes. He has also championed legislation to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, so that Minnesota's workforce is prepared to meet the employment needs of our innovative medical device community.



Fighting to Eliminate the Medical Device Tax

When the Senate Finance Committee first proposed a tax on medical devices in order to help fund health care reform, Sen. Franken fought to remove it, saying the tax would be unfair and harmful to the development of the industry.

As the full Senate debated the *Affordable Care Act*, he successfully cosponsored an amendment that delayed implementation of the tax for three years – until 2013. As the bill moved closer to passage, Sen. Franken pressed Senate leaders to eliminate the medical device tax from the bill, and succeeded in getting the tax cut in half.



As the implementation of the tax approached along with the "Fiscal Cliff", Sen. Franken urged negotiators to delay the implementation of the tax so that a full repeal could be negotiated. Sen. Franken is now a cosponsor of bipartisan legislation to repeal the medical device tax. He continues to work with Minnesota's medical device companies and with his congressional colleagues in both parties to repeal this tax.



Al Franken

U.S. Senator for Minnesota

Pushing to Get Medical Devices to Patients Safely and Quickly

For years, Sen. Franken has been pressing FDA to ensure that key FDA approval processes are efficient and are responsive to the needs of patients and device manufacturers.

Bringing medical device industry concerns to Washington: As a member of the Senate health committee, he has urged FDA to consider the impact that changes to key approval processes could have on patient access to devices, including urging the Institutes of Medicine to include medical device companies in their review of the 510(k) program. In 2011, he brought FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg to meet with Life Science Alley and Minnesota medical device manufacturers so that she could hear directly from them on the challenges they face.

Legislative successes: As a member of the Senate health committee, Sen. Franken negotiated the 2012 FDA reauthorization bill signed into law by President Obama. In addition to his central role in developing that legislation, Sen. Franken championed three specific provisions that will get life-saving medical devices to patients more quickly and safely.

- The first provision allows FDA to tap a deeper well of expertise from the medical device industry during the approval process, allowing devices to get to market more quickly and safely.
- The second encourages medical device makers to develop treatments for rare diseases, making it easier for patients with those diseases to get treatment.
- The third provision requires that FDA consult with the industry and other experts before implementing a proposed rule that could create new and burdensome requirements for companies making changes to their approved devices, which would cause even more delays.

Promoting Innovation and Job Creation

Supporting STEM Education: As a member of the Senate education committee, Sen. Franken has championed better access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. In 2011, he introduced legislation to provide incentives to the nation's best STEM teachers, who would in turn serve as mentors to other educators.

Reforming Our Outdated Patent System: In 2011, Sen. Franken was proud to support the *America Invents Act*, the first significant update to the nation's patent system in nearly 60 years. The law is making it faster and easier for Americans to patent their innovations and makes the process fairer for small businesses and inventors.

Supporting Incentives For Research and Development: Sen. Franken knows that giving businesses the tools they need to innovate, create jobs and stay competitive in the global marketplace is a vital part of protecting and growing our state's medical device industry. That's why he has supported legislation that would expand the Research and Development tax credit and make that credit permanent.