



February 20, 2015

For Immediate Release

### **South Dakota MAMES Members Meet with Senator John Thune**

MAMES South Dakota Member Kay Johnson, Owner of Midwest Medical hosted a meeting with Senator John Thune on Thursday, February 19, 2015 at her HME location in Watertown, South Dakota. Also meeting with Senator Thune were MAMES South Dakota members Blaine O'Leary, Owner, Missouri Breaks DME, Eagle Butte, SD, Bill Donat, Owner, Northland Rehab Supply, Sioux Falls, SD, Cindy Coy, Manager, Patient Financial Services, Avera Home Medical Equipment, Sioux Falls, SD, Dr. Cathy Gerrish, M.D. Brown Clinic, Watertown, SD and MAMES Executive Director, Rose Schafhauser.

This face to face meeting with Senator Thune was extremely successful in helping Senator Thune understand the extreme situation rural America will be facing with the implementation of competitive bid rates in 2016. *"Senator Thune was very interested in our facts and stories about the national role out of CB rates and the audit nightmares we have encountered."* said Kay Johnson, Owner, Midwest Medical in Watertown, South Dakota.



Senator Thune listens intently as Blaine O'Leary, Owner, Missouri Breaks DME, Eagle Butte SD explains the impact of CB rates on western SD and the access to care issues and business impact.

*"Senator Thune was very engaged and we are very grateful to him for allowing us nearly an hour to explain our concerns and the impacts to our members and the patients they so devotedly serve in South Dakota and across the Midwest."* said MAMES Executive Director Rose Schafhauser.

*"It was tremendous to have MAMES Members from across South Dakota in attendance to explain first hand to Senator Thune how patients and businesses would be impacted. We will certainly be looking to work with Senator Thune to prevent these devastating cuts to reimbursement rates across rural America."* continued Schafhauser.

For more information on this critical meeting with Senator Thune please contact Rose Schafhauser, MAMES Executive Director at 651-351-5395, [info@mames.com](mailto:info@mames.com) or Kay Johnson, Owner, Midwest Medical, Watertown, SD at 605-882-4210, [kay\\_johnson@iw.net](mailto:kay_johnson@iw.net).



Kay Johnson, Owner, Midwest Medical (3<sup>rd</sup> from left in whitejacket) explains the critical impacts of CB pricing in rural America to Senator John Thune at the visit she hosted on February 19, 2015.



Senator John Thune listens intently as Paul Johnson explains: "We just want to serve the patient!" during the February 19, 2015 visit with MAMES South Dakota Members in Watertown, SD



Rose Schafhauser, MAMES Executive Director outlines the devastation rural America faces if dramatic cuts to reimbursement are allowed to proceed.



Dr. Cathy Gerrish, MD, Brown Clinic, Watertown, SD explains the burdens on her practice of onerous regulations and the difficulties of documentation in working with our South Dakota providers in getting the necessary equipment for her patients.



Kay Johnson, Owner, Midwest Medical, Watertown, South Dakota greets Senator John Thune at the meeting she hosted February 19, 2015.