



Janet Murguía, President

National Office
Raul Yzaguirre Building
1126 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202.785.1670
Fax: 202.776.1792
www.nclr.org

January 10, 2007

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the U.S., I urge you to vote “Yes” on the “Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007” (H.R. 4). This legislation will take the first step in ensuring that the nation’s seniors, disabled, and individuals with severe health challenges have affordable access to preventive and treatment medicines through the Medicare program.

Preliminary data collected on Medicare Part D prescription drug pricing show that Americans are losing out on major savings because the government cannot negotiate prescription drug prices. One key finding in a recent Families USA report found that the median difference between the *lowest* Medicare Part D plan price and the *lowest* U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs negotiated price for the top 20 drugs prescribed to seniors is 58%. These price differences can put critical medicines out of reach, particularly for low-income households. This scenario may be especially true for Latinos; approximately one in five (19.9%) Latinos above the age of 65 was in poverty in 2005. As Latinos are the fastest-growing senior population in the U.S., it is essential that we enhance their ability to access needed prescription drugs and ensure a higher quality of life.

NCLR believes that this legislation will also help to generate resources, so Congress can commit attention to critical health issues, such as the rising costs of health care, and tackle key Latino health priorities, including high uninsurance rates which prevent many Latinos from gaining access to health care and prescription drugs.

Your vote to pass this legislation is a vote to improve health care. **Please vote “Yes” on H.R. 4.**

Sincerely,

Janet Murguía.
President and CEO