

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS

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NEWS RELEASE

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Alliance for Retired Americans Supports the Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act

The Alliance for Retired Americans has been fighting for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare that is universal, comprehensive, affordable and voluntary. Medicare is the nation's largest and most successful health insurance system serving the health needs of almost 40 million senior and disabled beneficiaries. What it needs is a prescription drug plan. Last year, the Congress failed to pass a prescription drug benefit. The Medicare Fair Price Prescription Medicine Benefit Act, a plan that was endorsed by the Alliance for Retired Americans, was not even allowed on to the House floor for debate. That was wrong. It was wrong to make seniors wait even longer for the medicines they desperately need. It was wrong to force them to choose between paying for food or heat and paying for expensive prescription drugs. It was wrong to force seniors to go to Canada to get the drugs they need at a price they can afford. Now the Congress has a chance to help seniors and finish the work it started.

The prescription drug plan being offered by Charles Rangel (D-NY) and John Dingell (D-MI) meets the needs of seniors. The Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act will give America's seniors and individuals with disabilities the relief they need with lower drug costs. They won't have to leave the traditional Medicare program they know or the doctors they trust to get drug coverage. They won't have to join a private insurance plan and worry about being denied coverage. This bill is good medicine for seniors who have waited long enough for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. This bill will ensure that seniors can get the drugs their doctors prescribe at lower costs. It is a bill with no gaps and no gimmicks, unlike some of the plans we've seen that provide only some coverage part of the time. The Alliance believes it is time we gave our seniors a clear plan with a real solution. The Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act of 2003 is good medicine for America's seniors.

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