



June 23, 2008

Dear Representative:

The undersigned members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO)—a diverse coalition that advocates on behalf of millions of Medicare beneficiaries—are writing to express our strong support for H.R. 6331, the *Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008*. This legislation would strengthen the Medicare program and significantly improve the lives of seniors and people with disabilities throughout the nation. In our view, a vote against the H.R. 6331 is a vote against America's seniors.

The organizations that comprise LCAO both serve and represent the interests of older Americans. We believe the fiscally responsible legislation is a clear win-win for seniors and those with disabilities. It would strengthen Medicare for those in greatest need and help assure access to providers in a fiscally responsible manner.

Among the enhancements and protections for Medicare beneficiaries in H.R. 6331, we are particularly pleased with the provisions that would:

- Improve access to a broad array of providers for millions of older and disabled Americans by blocking scheduled cuts to providers through December 2009;
- Strengthen low-income protections against rising Medicare costs;
- Improve access to preventive services;
- Begin to level the playing field between private insurance Medicare Advantage plans and traditional fee-for-service Medicare, consistent with nonpartisan MedPAC recommendations, thus saving taxpayers and Medicare beneficiaries billions of dollars;
- Improve consumer protections and oversight of the marketing and advertising of private insurance Medicare Advantage and Part D prescription drug plans;
- Provide mental health parity in Medicare by gradually lowering the 50 percent coinsurance rate for outpatient mental health services to 20 percent;
- Reduce medical costs and improve the safety and efficiency of prescription drugs through incentives for e-prescribing systems;
- Expand primary care and provide incentives for physicians to provide additional primary care services.

We urge you to support H.R. 6331 and America's seniors. Thank you for considering LCAO's views on this vital piece of legislation. We look forward to working with you to ensure that

Medicare continues to meet the needs of our nation's seniors by improving the quality of health care delivery and bringing more fairness, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility to the program.

AFL-CIO  
AFSCME Retiree Program  
Alliance For Retired Americans  
American Association Of Homes And Services For The Aging  
American Federation Of Teachers Program On Retirement & Retirees  
American Public Health Association  
American Society On Aging  
Association Of BellTel Retirees  
Easter Seals  
Families USA  
International Union, United Auto Workers  
National Academy Of Elder Law Attorneys  
National Active And Retired Federal Employees Association  
National Association Of Professional Geriatric Care Managers  
National Association Of Retired And Senior Volunteer Program Directors, Inc.  
National Association Of Social Workers  
National Association Of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs  
National Caucus And Center On Black Aged, Inc.  
National Committee to Preserve Social Security And Medicare  
National Council On Aging  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Senior Corps Association  
OWL, The Voice Of Midlife And Older Women  
The National Consumer Voice For Quality Long Term Care  
United Jewish Communities