

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 17, 2002

HEALTH POLICY EXPERTS WARY OF HOUSE REPUBLICAN
MEDICARE DRUG PLAN

Dear Colleague:

No need to just take our word for it, read the comments from experts interviewed in the *New York Times*, Sunday, June 16th, 2002 to hear their words of caution about the House Republican Medicare drug bill.

"I'm very skeptical that 'drug only' private plans would develop"

--Bill Gradison, former Republican Congressman and former president of the Health Insurance Association of America

With regard to the proposal to rely on private drug entities for drug benefits: "There is a risk of repeating the H.M.O. experience"

-- John C. Rother, policy director of AARP

With regard to whether private insurance plans would participate in the Republican Medicare drug plan: "I don't think it's impossible, but the odds are against it."

-- Richard A. Barasch, chairman of Universal American Financial Corporation of Rye Brook, N.Y., which sells Medigap coverage to 400,000 people

When asked if they favor being placed at financial risk as the Republican plan requires: "We are not enthusiastic about that approach."

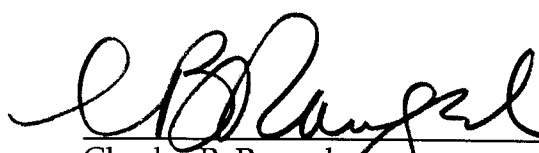
-- Thomas M. Boudreau, senior vice president and general counsel of Express Scripts

With regard to their experience with accepting financial risk for providing drug benefits: "We are typically paid a fee, generally less than \$1, for each claim. But we do not bear financial risk."

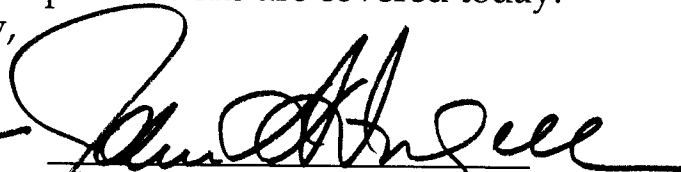
-- Blair Jackson, a spokesman for AdvancePCS

Seniors deserve a real Medicare drug benefit. Vote "NO" on the House Republican's risky Medicare drug scheme and support the House Democratic Alternative that will add prescription drug benefits to Medicare just like doctors' visits and hospitalizations are covered today.

Sincerely,



Charles B. Rangel
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Ways and Means



John D. Dingell
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Pete Stark
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Health



Sherrod Brown
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Health