

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 20, 2004

Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, the General Accounting Office (GAO) has ruled that your Administration illegally spent taxpayer dollars for political propaganda in violation of two laws.\* To make matters worse, these funds were taken from the Medicare Trust Fund. We are writing today to strongly urge you to immediately repay the money taken from Medicare with funds from your principal reelection campaign fund.

Today we are introducing legislation to compel you to repay these illegally appropriated taxpayer dollars to the Medicare Trust Fund from your campaign account. However, we hope that you will take immediate action to make this legislation unnecessary.

While the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has identified an initial cost for the misappropriation, HHS refused to document the cost to GAO. As HHS complies with the disclosure requirements of the Antideficiency Act, further costs will likely be documented. Therefore, we would expect sums to be repaid as they are identified through this process.

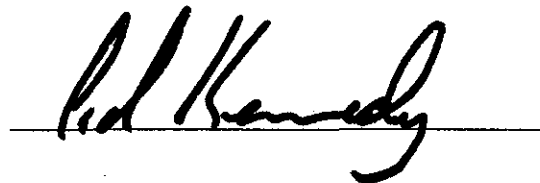
We are also greatly distressed by the amount of resources your Administration is putting into boosting the public image of the new Medicare law rather than making sure that the program actually works. Seniors are having an extremely difficult time navigating the Medicare discount card program's confusing array of private plans. There are numerous reports of inaccurate information being provided by HHS, frustration with an overload of information that is difficult to sort through and long wait times for answers on the 1-800-MEDICARE line.

It is also vital to see that these illegal acts are not repeated. In order to prevent illegal appropriations in the future, we also urge you to issue an Administration-wide directive to all agencies warning them to comply with the GAO ruling. Please inform us of any additional actions you take to prevent future violations of the law. We must guard against any misuse of taxpayer dollars, especially those reserved for Medicare.

Sincerely,

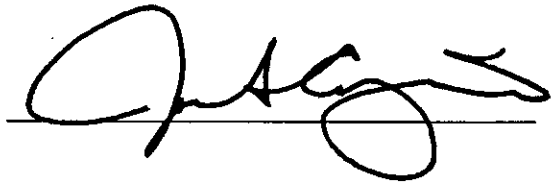


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\* See GAO Decision B-302710 (May 19, 2004). The two laws violated were the "publicity or propaganda" clause of the Omnibus Appropriations bill, Pub. L. No. 108-7, Div J, Tit VI, § 626, 117 Stat. 11, 470 (2003) and the Antideficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. § 1341.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeb Bush", written above a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Debbie Steenaw", written above a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Hart", written above a horizontal line.

A horizontal line, likely a placeholder for a signature.