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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515



CONGRESSMAN KEN CALVERT

Seniors Newsletter • 44th District of California • Summer 2003

Dear Seniors:

The 108th Congress faces many exciting challenges ahead as we move into the summer months. Issues important to the senior community continue to be a priority for this Congress and me. One of the top concerns of every American is the state of the economy. As this letter goes to press, there are mixed signals coming from the economy. Consumer confidence remains fairly high and the stock market continues its slow upward trend. However, jobless claims are up and growth is still minimal. In order to jump start the economy, Congress and the President provided a \$350 billion tax cut. Within the tax cut were rate reductions on the dividend tax and an acceleration of the tax cuts scheduled to take place in 2004 and 2006. Many seniors receive dividend income and will experience an increase in their return because of the dividend tax reduction. This increase of cash flow to the American people will allow greater spending, saving, and investing – thereby contributing to the growth of our economy.

Homeland Security and the War on Terrorism are also on the minds of the American people. Congress recently passed the 2004 Defense Authorization Bill which will contribute the needed resources to better equip and pay our military and research new ways to fight the war on terror. I am committed to supporting the military in any way I can and am extremely proud of the men and women who fought and prevailed in Iraq. Each of us owes them a debt of gratitude for their sacrifice and bravery.

I look forward to continuing my work in Congress on behalf of all the residents of the 44th District of California, which will include ensuring a reliable and quality water supply for California, improving transportation, securing Social Security, and providing a much needed prescription drug benefit.

Sincerely,



THIS LETTER

- Social Security Protection Act
- Medicare Reform

Please contact me through my website at <http://www.house.gov/calvert> or at one of the following locations:

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SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM ACT

On April 2, 2003, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 743, the Social Security Act of 2003, which strengthens Social Security by helping extinguish known fraud and abuse. The legislation includes the following provisions:

- ✓ Raises the standards and imposes stricter penalties for exploitive representative payees who were meant to help manage the affairs of seniors and individuals with disabilities
- ✓ Halts payments to fugitive felons and parole/probation violators
- ✓ Helps people with disabilities gain access to legal representation when applying for Social Security benefits
- ✓ Reforms a loophole in the Government Pension Offset that the nonpartisan Government Accounting Office reported so far could cost the trust fund nearly \$450 million

The bill was referred to the Senate on April 3, 2003, but the Senate has yet to take any action. Part of ensuring the long-term solvency of Social Security is rooting out fraud and waste within the program. I encourage you to contact both California Senators in support of this legislation so that we can continue to preserve and protect Social Security.

MEDICARE REFORM

Medicare has provided countless seniors with the care they need and deserve. As we move into the 21st Century we need to ensure that these needs continue to be met. Congress has a responsibility to modernize Medicare so that seniors may continue to live longer, healthier lives. The main principles of the House Republican plan currently in conference include:

Principle 1: Guarantee All Senior Citizens an Affordable Prescription Drug Benefit Under Medicare

- ✓ Allow all seniors to voluntarily participate in a Medicare plan that provides prescription drug coverage and leverages the purchasing power of seniors to negotiate discounts
- ✓ Help seniors immediately lower their prescription drug costs
- ✓ Provide additional assistance for low-income seniors who need the most help to improve their quality of life

Principle 2: Protect Senior Citizens with the Right-to-Choose a Benefits Package that is Best for Them

- ✓ Provide seniors with a better range of plan options under Medicare
- ✓ Cap out-of-pocket costs so seniors will not risk bankruptcy in case of serious illness

Principle 3: Strengthen Medicare for All Senior Citizens and Future Generations

- ✓ Ensure delivery of needed health care services in rural and urban America
- ✓ Create structural improvements to curb runaway health care costs that jeopardize Medicare's financial future



Congressman Calvert meets with seniors to discuss issues important to the senior community.