



November 9, 2011

An open letter to Wisconsin's Congressional Delegation:

As the Super Committee in Congress works to make \$1.2 trillion in cuts to overall spending, it has made clear that "everything is on the table." We are writing today to ask you join us in sending a united message to the Super Committee that the Medicare Part D program should not be cut because it has been a huge success.

We recognize committee members have an enormous task ahead of them with many difficult decisions to make along the way. However, we want to make it very clear that cuts to Medicare Part D will limit access to medical care and treatment for many in Wisconsin which will not save money over the long term. Any delay in providing necessary medications can have significantly detrimental effects on patient conditions and often results in more costly care over the long term. We hope you, the committee and other members of Congress will remember the adage to not be "pennywise and pound foolish" as program cuts are weighed.

As Medicare Part D is reviewed, please remind others it is the most cost-effective program within the federal health insurance programs and a good deal for taxpayers. Estimates by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office indicate that Part D's price to the public will come in at 46% less than initially estimated for the first decade. In fact, Part D is saving the entire Medicare program money, according to a recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Improved access and adherence to medicine is saving \$1,200 per year in hospital, nursing home and other costs for each senior who previously lacked prescription drug coverage, according to the study. This is saving the Medicare program an estimated \$12 billion each year.

It's a good deal for seniors too because they are paying less out of pocket for their prescriptions. The total average out-of-pocket prescription drug costs dropped between 13% and 15% thanks to the creation of Part D. Here in Wisconsin, Part D plans are available for as little as \$14.80 per month.

The competitive-based Medicare Part D program is working and should be used as a model for reforming other elements of federal health care programs. Medicare Part D enrollees are overwhelmingly satisfied with this program. A recent Medicare Today survey reported that 84 % of seniors are satisfied with the program.

As you, the Super Committee and others work through the federal budget to reduce government spending, we ask that the success of Medicare Part D be recognized and preserved. The program is working and it's saving money for beneficiaries and the government.

Thank you,

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