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May 6, 2003

Honorable Charles B. Rangel
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

BY FAX: 202- 225-5680

Dear Congressman Rangel:

The Center for Medicare Advocacy is a national, non-partisan education and advocacy organization that identifies and promotes policy and advocacy solutions to ensure that elders and people with disabilities have access to quality health care. We are very pleased to endorse your Medicare prescription drug bill, H.R. 1199.

H.R. 1199 is the only prescription drug proposal that meets all of our principles for a meaningful, universal, affordable prescription drug benefit. In particular, we are pleased that, under your proposal:

- The drug benefit will be part of the Medicare program and administered in the same way that benefits under Medicare Parts A and B are administered.
- Beneficiaries will not be forced into an HMO or PPO in order to get prescription drug coverage.
- Beneficiaries will pay a reasonable co-payment for any prescription, regardless of the amount they spend on drugs.
- Beneficiaries will have continuous coverage. They will not have to pay the full cost of any drugs after the deductible is met, regardless of the amount they spend on drugs.

- Beneficiaries will not be forced to pay higher co-payments for current Medicare benefits such as home health services in exchange for a Medicare drug benefit.
- Low-income Medicare beneficiaries will be protected, regardless of their age and where they live.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy appreciates the efforts you have taken to support the needs of elders and people with disabilities. We look forward to working with you to enact a Medicare prescription drug benefit that meets the needs of the people the Medicare statute was designed to protect, Medicare beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith A. Stein / 17".

Judith A. Stein,
Executive Director