

March 9, 2006

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1505

Mr. Tony Beraldi
238 Harmony Street
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

Dear Mr. Beraldi,

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns regarding problems the recently implemented Medicare prescription drug benefit. I am always interested in hearing your views on issues such as this.

As you may know, in 2003, Congress passed the Medicare Modernization Act which creates a new benefit to help Medicare beneficiaries who choose to enroll with their prescription drug costs starting January 1, 2006. However, some have expressed concern about problems with the implementation of the program since it has begun. Some patients have had difficulty getting their medications through their plans; and some pharmacists have had trouble getting paid for covered drugs.

While I have been assured that work is being done to fix these difficulties, I understand your frustration. During this period of transition, to assist individual beneficiaries who are experiencing problems at the pharmacy counter, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has established a nationwide network of hundreds of caseworkers who are working closely with plans, beneficiaries, and states to expedite any processing issues and to get beneficiaries their prescriptions. You may wish to call 1-800-MEDICARE if you are in need of assistance. Pharmacists can also call the special toll-free pharmacist line at 1-866-835-7595 to help get assistance for beneficiaries.

Ensuring fair and effective healthcare coverage to our seniors is one of my top priorities as your congressman. I will continue to closely monitor developments regarding this issue and actively encourage changes that are in the best interests of seniors and ensure beneficiaries get the medications they need. As I continue my work here in Congress, I will keep your thoughts in mind when considering ways to address concerns regarding this issue.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me regarding this issue. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of further help to you.

Sincerely,



Steve King
Member of Congress

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