

(January 9, 2006) LIPINSKI CONTINUES TO FIGHT FOR MORE TIME TO SIGN UP FOR MEDICARE DRUG PLANS

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SAYS MEDICARE DRUG PLANS ARE TOO CONFUSING, SIGNS DISCHARGE PETITION ON LEGISLATION TO HELP

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representative Dan Lipinski recently gave the following statement urged Congress to give Medicare beneficiaries more time to navigate through the dozens of confusing Medicare drug plans so they can choose a plan that best meets their needs. Congressman Lipinski is a cosponsor of legislation that would give seniors and people with disabilities a full year to choose a Medicare drug plan and has signed a discharge petition to immediately bring this legislation up for a vote before the full House of Representatives:

"There is one issue of great concern that I hear about over and over again back home, the needlessly complicated Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Program. Seniors are confused and frustrated as they attempt to study 60 plans in order to first decide whether to join, and then to choose which plan to sign up for. Many are simply giving up. I have already held half a dozen informational seminars on the program and every session has been packed. There is clearly a problem.

Congress could - and should - make the program better, more affordable, and less confusing by allowing Medicare to negotiate prices with drug companies. But the very least that Congress must do is pass the Medicare Informed Choice Act, which would delay the late enrollment penalty, prevent beneficiaries from losing their employer-based coverage, and allow seniors to switch plans if they make a mistake. Given the current confusion it is essential that we allow beneficiaries to take their time, check the facts, and know their options without being rushed to choose. We owe no less to our seniors."

Additionally, Congressman Dan Lipinski is working to help seniors understand the complexity of the new Medicare Prescription Drug Program by holding informational seminars at various locations throughout the district. For more information contact the Chicago office at (312) 886-0481. Below are local seminars:

Thursday - January 12th - Berwyn

6500 West 31st St.

10:00 am

Monday - January 16th - Chicago Ridge

Village of Chicago Ridge

10455 S. Ridgeland Ave.

11:30 am

Tuesday - January 17th - Stickney

North Medical Center

6721 West 40th St.

9:00 am

Wednesday - January 18th - Burbank

Louis Viverito Center

7745 S. Leamington Ave.

10:00 am

Thursday - January 19th - Worth

Village of Worth

7112 W. 111th St.

10:00 a.m.

Monday - January 23th - Central Stickney

Central Clinic

4949 S. Long Ave.

10:00 am

Friday- February 3rd - Alsip

Worth Township Senior Center

11601 S. Pulaski Rd.

2:00 pm

Monday - February 13th - Chicago Ridge

Village of Chicago Ridge

10455 S Ridgeland

12:00 p.m.

Tuesday - February 14th - West Lawn Park, 13th Ward

4233 West 65th St.

10:00 a.m.

Wednesday - February 15th - Westchester

Westchester Park District

10201 Bond St.

11:00 am

Friday - February 17th - Chicago, 11th Ward

McKinley Park

2210 W. Pershing Rd.

11:00 a.m.

Tuesday - February 21st - Bridgeport, 11th Ward

McGuane Park

2901 S. Polar

10:00 a.m.

Thursday - February 23th - Berwyn

YMCA

2947 S. Oak Park Ave.

10:00 a.m.

Friday - February 24th - Carneyville, 11th Ward

Union Avenue United Methodist

4356 S. Union Ave.

10:00 a.m.