

## (January 12, 2007) AARP Illinois

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CHICAGO, Jan. 12 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The following release was issued today by AARP Illinois:

ATTENTION NEWS DESKS: This is the first of AARP's Key Vote News Alerts. AARP is recording House and Senate roll call votes on key issues, and informing its nearly 38 million members of the results of these key votes throughout the 110th Congress.

SUMMARY: H.R. 4 the "Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act" passed the U.S. House of Representatives today with a vote of 225-170-10 and now moves to the Senate. H.R. 4 gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) the authority to leverage Medicare's significant buying power to lower drug costs for Medicare. AARP supports the passage of this legislation.

VOTED YES ON H.R. 4 VOTED NO ON H.R. 4 Bean, Melissa L.\* X Biggert, Judy X Costello, Jerry F. X Davis, Danny K.\* X Emanuel, Rahm X Gutierrez, Luis V. X Hare, Phil\* X Hastert, J. Dennis\*\* Jackson, Jesse L. Jr. X Johnson, Timothy V. X Kirk, Mark Steven\* (Also did not vote) LaHood, Ray\* X Lipinski, Daniel X Manzullo, Donald A. X Roskam, Peter J. X Rush, Bobby L. X Schakowsky, Janice D.\* X Shimkus, John X Weller, Jerry X

\*Indicated support for Medicare negotiating to lower drug prices as reported in 2006 AARP Voters' Guides

\*\*Did not vote

Bob Gallo, State Director for AARP Illinois commented, "AARP commends the Representatives from Illinois who voted yes on H.R. 4, the 'Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act.' We are disappointed with those who voted against the bill. AARP members are deeply concerned about health care costs. They want AARP to represent their concerns in Washington, and are

looking to us to keep them informed about how Congress responds to our efforts."

AARP is also taking the Key Votes, and comparing them with the position taken by the Representative in the organization's 2006 Voters' Guide. "AARP is particularly disappointed with the vote of Representative Ray LaHood against H.R. 4 since he clearly indicated support in the Voters' Guide for allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power," said Gallo.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** AARP strongly supports H.R. 4 because making prescription drugs more affordable is a high priority for the association. Polls show that AARP members overwhelmingly supported giving Medicare the power to bargain for lower drug costs. In a June 2006 poll, 90% of AARP members across all political affiliations supported giving the HHS Secretary the power to bargain for lower drug prices in Medicare.

Prescription drug prices continue to rise. According to AARP's 3rd Quarter 2006 Watchdog Report, manufacturer prescription drug prices for brand name drugs rose 6.2% in the last 12 month period, outpacing the rate of general inflation which rose 3.7%.

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