

2/17/2006 Moran Introduces Legislation to Improve Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit

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Medicare ABC for D Act to Help Program Run More Smoothly and Assist Seniors

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced the introduction of H.R. 4796, the Medicare ABC for D Act - to bring Accountability, Bargaining and Compassion to the Part D drug benefit. Moran voted against the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan in November 2003 because he was concerned the plan would fail to meet the needs of rural seniors.

"This program was intended to help seniors, but with the complexity and confusion surrounding it, that has not been the case," Moran said. "I have been hearing from seniors across Kansas about this issue, and this legislation is a comprehensive approach to improving this program."

The Medicare ABC for D Act extends the enrollment deadline through December 31 of this year to allow seniors more time to determine which plan best fits their needs. It also requires insurance companies to register with state insurance departments in each state where they offer their drug plans. This helps keep insurance departments informed so they can advocate on behalf of seniors. In addition, this legislation will help seniors get better prices on prescription drugs by authorizing the Department of Health and Human Services to negotiate with drug manufacturers. Finally, more funding will be provided for outreach and education at the local level.

"Efforts by local volunteers need to continue, but they must have resources in order to do this," Moran said. "Now is not the time to turn our backs on this problem. Kansas seniors need help."

Moran is a member of the steering committee of the House Rural Health Care Coalition.

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