

Sent: Thu, 14 Aug 2003 16:02:26 -0400
From: "Besanceney, Brian R." </O=EOP/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE
GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=BRIAN R. BESANCENEY>

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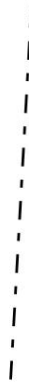
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Subject: Talking Points: President's Vision for Medicare Reform 8.14.03
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Talking Points: President's Vision for Medicare Reform

"The best way to provide our seniors with prescription drug coverage and better preventative care is to give them better choices under Medicare. If seniors have choices, health plans will compete for their business, by offering better coverage at affordable prices."

— *President George W. Bush, July 30, 2003*

A modern Medicare system must offer more choices and better benefits to every senior.

- **All seniors should have access to a prescription drug benefit under Medicare.**
- **All seniors should be able to choose the health care plan that best fits their needs**—without being forced into an HMO. And seniors should have the same types of choices available to Members of Congress and other Federal employees.
- **All seniors should have access to better coverage of preventative medicine—and protections from high out-of-pocket medical costs.**

President Bush's framework for Medicare and both the House and Senate bills give seniors the freedom to choose one of three options:

1. **Seniors who are happy with the current Medicare system would be able to stay in that system and receive prescription drug coverage.** Seniors who choose this coverage would

pay about \$35 per month. Those who currently have no coverage for their prescription drugs and who sign up for this new benefit would reduce their spending on prescription medicine by about half. People with low incomes would save even more.

2. **Seniors would also have the choice of enrolling in Medicare- approved, privately insured plans.** These plans would include a prescription drug benefit and protection against high out-of-pocket medical expenses. Seniors who select these plans would be able to choose their specialists, hospitals, and primary doctors. Federal workers and Members of Congress have the option of enrolling in these same types of plans. What is good for public servants, including Members of the House and Senate, is good for America's senior citizens.
3. **Seniors who want the kind of benefits available in managed care plans, including prescription drug coverage, would have that choice as well.** This option would place seniors in an affordable network of doctors, provide drug coverage, and allow seniors to keep their out-of-pocket costs to a minimum.

Moving toward this system will take time, so Congressional negotiators have accepted the President's recommendation to provide all American seniors with a **prescription drug discount card beginning next year**, and to provide **cash assistance to help low-income seniors purchase their medicines**.

The President's plan commits an additional \$400 billion over the next decade for this vision of a modernized Medicare system.

Both the House and Senate have passed bills for modernizing Medicare with better benefits and more choices for seniors. Now the President urges them to keep their focus on what is at stake for America's growing senior population and pass this historic legislation as soon as possible.

TALKING POINTS: PRESIDENT'S VISION FOR MEDICARE REFORM

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