

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 13, 2006

The Honorable Michael Leavitt
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

We are concerned that many of the 2007 Medicare Part D plan names are misleading and will be confusing to seniors. With the open enrollment period set to start on November 15th, we urge you to take immediate steps to ensure seniors are provided accurate information about the available plans.

Nearly all of the national plans contain a gap in drug coverage known as the donut hole, but you would never know this by reading through the list of plan names. Many of the national plan names include the words "complete," "premier plus" or "gold".

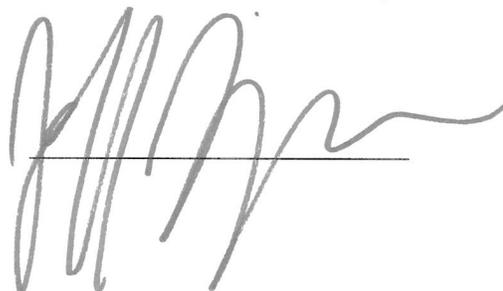
Although several of these plans do cover generic drugs in the donut hole, seniors in these plans will have to pay one hundred percent of the cost out-of-pocket for brand name products. How can a plan be called "complete" when it contains a gap in drug coverage?

The Medicare Part D marketing guidelines should be revised to ensure that plan names are not confusing or downright misleading. In addition, if a plan contains a gap in coverage, it should be required to disclose this gap in all of its marketing materials.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,






Frank R. Lautenberg New Jersey

Robert A. Taft Ohio

Chuck Schumer James Christian

Dick Durbin

Blanche R. Lincoln

Paul Kennedy

Ken Salazar

Jim F. Kerry

Eric Bozell