



December 3, 2009

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Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I am writing to express our strong support for the amendment offered by Senator Michael Bennet to strengthen Medicare. We urge you to reject Senator McCain's motion – which would weaken Medicare by siphoning off more funds from seniors to private insurance companies – and pass the Bennet amendment, which would protect seniors and preserve the promise of Medicare for years to come.

Senator McCain's motion to commit the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act with instructions back to the Senate Finance Committee would put seniors' health care at risk. It would accelerate the insolvency of Medicare by continuing \$120 billion in overpayments to private insurance companies that run Medicare Advantage plans. It would require seniors to pay more to get less. All Medicare beneficiaries pay the price of excessive overpayments through higher premiums – even though the majority of seniors are not enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan. The typical couple in Medicare pays an extra \$90 per year to fund overpayments to private insurance companies. The McCain motion would require seniors to continue to pay for preventative services and maintain the higher costs of prescriptions in the so-called donut hole in Medicare Part D.

The Bennet amendment guarantees no benefit cuts and keeps Medicare savings in Medicare.

AFSCME urges you to reject the McCain motion and pass the Bennet amendment.

Sincerely,

Charles M. Loveless
Director of Legislation

CML:lb:gm

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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