



October 15, 2009

Representative Henry Johnson
1133 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Johnson:

Medicare Access for Patients to Prescription Drugs (MAPRx) Coalition, comprised of 47 national patient, family caregiver and health professional organizations, is committed to ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries have access to safe, appropriate, affordable prescription drugs under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D).

We applaud your leadership in introducing H.R. 3799, The Affordable Access to Prescription Medications Act of 2009 that will cap the high out-of-pocket spending on prescription medications. According to an April 30, 2009 GAO report, out-of-pocket spending for prescription drugs range from \$1,200 to \$40,000 for a 30 day supply per person. For those with chronic conditions, faced with huge out-of-pocket expenses this legislation will vastly improve access to life sustaining medications, and improve the health and well-being of millions.

Additionally, this legislation will address the growing practice of implementing “specialty tiers” by Medicare Part D plans. This discriminatory practice imposes a co-insurance or percentage of 20-35 percent (or even higher in some cases) of the cost of the drug on to a disproportionately large percentage of patients who have severe, chronic, debilitating, and often life-threatening conditions. As a result, this practice is creating significant inequities in the Part D program and new access barriers for many Medicare beneficiaries.

The MAPRx coalition thanks you for your leadership and stands ready to assist in passage of the Affordable Access to Prescription Medications Act of 2009.

Sincerely,

- Arthritis Foundation
- American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
- Breast Cancer-Network of Strength
- Easter Seals
- Epilepsy Foundation
- Lupus Foundation of America
- Mental Health America
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
- National Health Council
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- National Organization for Rare Disorders
- National Spinal Cord Injury Association
- The AIDS Institute
- The Arc of the United States

- United Cerebral Palsy
- United Spinal Association