

SEPTEMBER 28, 2000

ALDERMEN DELIVER PETITION SIGNED BY 80,000 CHICAGO SENIORS CALLING FOR MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

{WASHINGTON, D.C. - At a news conference today on Capitol Hill, Chicago city Aldermen delivered to members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation a petition signed by 80,000 Chicago seniors calling for a Medicare prescription drug benefit.[] []

U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), other members of Congress representing the City of Chicago, and Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) joined the Aldermen.[] Schakowsky hailed the effort and promised to continue to fight in Congress for a real prescription drug benefit under Medicare.[] [] [] []

"The Aldermen in Chicago know that the seniors they represent are struggling every day to pay for their prescription drugs and this petition underscores that struggle.[] The Democrats in the Illinois Congressional delegation will work to deliver to seniors in Chicago and the nation a prescription drug plan under Medicare that is universal, affordable, and voluntary," Schakowsky said.[]

Yesterday, Schakowsky, senior citizens from across the country, and Democrats delivered thousands of letters, receipts, and empty pill bottles sent to Washington by seniors being gouged by drug companies to Speaker Dennis Hastert asking him to schedule a vote on a Medicare prescription drug benefit.

Schakowsky is supporting a plan that would allow seniors on Medicare to choose a prescription drug benefit in addition to their current plan.[] Under the plan, Medicare will pay 50% of all drug costs up to \$5,000, and 100% of all out-of-pocket expenses over \$4,000.[] Premiums for this option will start at \$26, rising to \$51 once all benefits are fully phased in.[] The Republican leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives has not yet allowed a vote on the plan to offer a prescription drug benefit under Medicare.