

Draft 06/29/00 11:15am
Terry Edmonds

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
PRESCRIPTION DRUG TOPPER
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, DC
June 29, 2000**

Before we conclude, I would ~~just~~ like to comment on last night's vote in the House on prescription drug coverage. I think the American people should know that rather than making real progress, the Republican prescription drug bill made an empty promise to America's seniors. That bill passed, along partisan lines, and offers a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that insurance companies themselves say won't work. It provides more political cover for Republicans than insurance coverage for our nation's seniors.

Our concerns have just been confirmed by new analysis from Congress's own budget office. In a report made available just yesterday, the Congressional Budget Office concludes that more than half of Medicare beneficiaries without drug coverage today would not be covered by the Republican private insurance plan. It also shows that premiums would be 50 percent higher than those under my plan. This is for a benefit that is at least 20 percent less valuable.

America's seniors and people with disabilities understand the difference between a real prescription drug plan and a flawed imitation. That is why our plan is supported by leading aging and disability groups across the country. The only groups endorsing the Republican plan are drug manufacturers and their allies. We need legislation that puts the public interest above the special interests. ~~And~~ any prescription drug plan that is passed ~~should~~ ^{must} benefit the people who need the drugs more than those who make them.

~~Let me be clear: I will not deliver a false promise to America's seniors and people with disabilities. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes Congress, I will not sign it.~~ So, I ask the Congress to work across party lines and send me a bipartisan bill that ensures an affordable, available and dependable Medicare prescription drug option for all seniors.

Thank you.

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America's seniors and people with disabilities understand the difference between a real prescription drug plan and a flawed imitation. That is why our plan is supported by leading aging and disability groups across the country. The only groups endorsing the Republican plan are drug manufacturers and their allies. We need legislation that puts the public interest above the special interests. And any prescription drug plan that is passed should benefit the people who need the drugs more than those who make them.

Let me be clear: I will not deliver a false promise to America's seniors and people with disabilities. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes Congress, I will not sign it. So, I ask the Congress to work across party lines and send me a bipartisan bill that ensures an affordable, available and dependable Medicare prescription drug option for all seniors.

Thank you.

Draft 06/29/00 10:25am
Terry Edmonds

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
PRESCRIPTION DRUG TOPPER
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, DC
June 29, 2000

~~Good morning~~. Before we conclude, I would ~~just~~ like to comment on last night's vote in the House on prescription drug coverage. I think the American people should know that rather than making real progress, the prescription drug ~~vote in the House~~, made an empty promise to America's seniors. The ~~bill that passed~~, largely along partisan lines, offers a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that insurance companies themselves say won't work. It provides more political cover for Republicans than insurance coverage for our nation's seniors. That is not just my opinion. ~~Congress's own budget office concludes in its analysis of the bill, that more than half of those who do not have coverage today, would not be able to afford the private insurance benefit offered by this bill. It also shows that premiums would be 50 percent higher than those under my plan for a benefit that is 20 percent less valuable.~~

America's seniors and people with disabilities understand the difference between a real prescription drug plan and a flawed imitation. That is why our plan is endorsed by leading aging and disability groups across the country. The only groups endorsing the Republican plan are the drug manufacturers and their allies. The majority leadership also understands the difference. That's why they would not even let our alternative plan come up for a vote. They were afraid it would pass.

Let me be clear: I will not deliver a false promise to America's seniors. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes Congress, I will ~~vote~~ it. So, I ask the Congress to work across party lines and send me a bipartisan bill that ensures and affordable, available and dependable Medicare prescription drug option for all seniors.

Thank you.

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Let me be clear: I will not deliver a false promise to America's seniors and people with disabilities. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes Congress, I will not sign it. So, I ask the Congress to work across party lines and send me a bipartisan bill that ensures an affordable, available and dependable Medicare prescription drug option for all seniors.

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