



10 G Street NE
Suite 600
Washington DC 20002-4215
202-216-0420
800-966-1935
www.ncpssm.org

November 20, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
The Capitol, Room S-221
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I write to urge the Senate to vote for cloture and begin the Floor debate on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

As you know, seniors throughout the country have expressed reservations about health reform and the impact it will have on Medicare. While we share a number of their specific concerns, we are also very well aware of the positive impact health reform can have on the future of the Medicare program and its beneficiaries. Medicare is not immune from the same cost pressures that are making health care unaffordable throughout society for millions of workers and their families, despite the fact that historically it has been more efficient than health care in the private sector.

Seniors are already spending about one-third of their Social Security checks on out-of-pocket Medicare costs – a burden that is expected to keep increasing over time. It is this future cost growth in health care that makes it clear that the status quo is not an option for Medicare beneficiaries. If inflation in the broader health care system is not curtailed, Medicare will become increasingly unaffordable for seniors and for the federal government.

The questions and concerns our members have can be adequately addressed only if the Senate proceeds to a full debate on health reform legislation. We praise you for your willingness to debate health reform under an open and participatory legislative process. We also appreciate your sensitivity and that of Chairman Baucus to some of the concerns we have expressed on behalf of our members, and your willingness to make improvements to the bill to address these concerns.

It is well past time Congress addressed this critical issue. We strongly urge all Senators to vote for the motion to proceed so the full Senate can begin to debate the best way to reform health care for our nation's future.

Cordially,

Barbara B. Kennelly
President and CEO