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**Copies of this letter were also sent to Representatives Berry and Schakowsky*

January 21, 2009

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I am writing to endorse your legislation, the *Medicare Prescription Drug Savings and Choice Act*. We applaud this effort to make the prescription drug benefit a true part of the Medicare program.

We understand that your legislation would provide seniors with the opportunity to purchase prescription drugs directly through a Medicare-administered Part D plan. Unfortunately, the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) only allows private companies to participate in the Part D program. The *Medicare Drug Savings and Choice Act* addresses this fundamental flaw in the Medicare law by creating a nationwide government-administered alternative to private prescription drug plans.

We also understand that your legislation would require the federal government to use its purchasing power to negotiate lower prices on prescription drugs for those beneficiaries who enroll in the Medicare administered plan. Price negotiation is a tool that has been effectively used by the Department of Veterans Affairs and many state governments to deliver lower drug prices. We believe that price negotiation should be used to bring the same positive results to the Medicare program.

We look forward to working with you to achieve enactment of this important legislation. Thanks you for your continued leadership on behalf of our nation's seniors.

Cordially,

Barbara B. Kennelly
President and CEO