

JIM GERLACH

6TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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LAND CONSERVATION CAUCUS, CO-CHAIR

April 22, 2009

Mr. F Darnall Daley
1751 Garfield Ave
Reading, PA 19610

Dear Mr. Daley:

Thank you for contacting me with opposition to cutting funding for the Medicare Advantage program. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your comments.

As you may have seen, the House of Representatives had passed several pieces of legislation to address the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) program this session. One of these bills, H.R. 3162, passed the House on August 1, 2007, but it was not voted on in the Senate. I did not support passage of this bill because it would have cut Medicare Advantage program funding and essentially pit the health care interests and choices of grandparents against their grandchildren.

In particular, H.R. 3162 would have cut Medicare benefits for an estimated 29,159 seniors in my Congressional district who are currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Program. More specifically, the bill called for cutting at least \$153 billion in Medicare Advantage spending and that would, by all estimates, have resulted in the loss of Advantage benefits to more than 3 million seniors in the U.S. and over 29,000 seniors in my district.

Contrary to H.R. 3162, Congress passed a bill that President Bush signed into law on December 29th that reauthorizes the SCHIP program through 2008. I am happy to let you know that this bill, S. 2499, the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007, did not contain cuts to seniors' Medicare Advantage plans. However, the Democrat Majority in the House of Representatives has indicated that they may, in the future, look to cut funding to the Medicare Advantage program to pay for other initiatives in their health care agenda. Please know that I am going to closely analyze these initiatives and protect the health care benefits of our nation's seniors.

Again, thank you for contacting me with your concerns. If I can be of any assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

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Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress

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P.S. Please visit me on the internet at <http://www.gerlach.house.gov>.