



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

MAY 3 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Mr. Ryan:

Thank you for your leadership in providing a Medicare drug benefit to all seniors and additional assistance to those who have low-incomes, and your continued interest in SeniorCare. As you know, the five-year SeniorCare pharmacy demonstration project is scheduled to expire on June, 30, 2007. We have received a formal request from the state for a temporary extension to December 31, 2007 in order to develop an alternative Part D wrap around program. I greatly appreciate your advocacy on behalf of Wisconsin's seniors for a smooth transition to such a new program.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has conveyed our willingness to allow a short-term extension of SeniorCare through December 31, 2007. Our formal approval of this extension request will be provided once the state has adopted a transition plan. We also pledged our full cooperation and support if the state elects to design a state-funded program to wrap around the Medicare benefit. We have designated staff to work with the state and are willing to send our team to Wisconsin at the state's earliest convenience.

You have asked what steps the state should be taking. It is our understanding that the State is moving expeditiously to lay out benchmarks for assuring a timely and smooth transition including communication to SeniorCare enrollees about Part D, the identification of those who may qualify for additional federal subsidies, and the necessary mechanisms to administer the wrap around.

We look forward to working with Wisconsin on this important project. I will be happy to keep you updated on further developments.

Sincerely,

Michael O. Leavitt