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NEWS RELEASE
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Dingell Blasts Administration's Medicare "Trigger" Proposal

Washington, DC — Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, today responded to the Bush Administration's issuance of a Medicare "trigger" proposal. The Administration today released a proposal to cut Medicare by shifting more costs to seniors. This proposal comes in response to the Republican Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, which requires the Administration to send a proposal to Congress to reduce Medicare spending if general revenues contribute more than 45% of program revenues in more than two consecutive years.

"The whole concept of the Medicare trigger is arbitrary and little more than a scare tactic to promote cuts to the most successful social program of our time," said Dingell. "This proposal shows us exactly where Republicans stand when it comes to helping seniors and people with disabilities. The President's idea for "improving" the program is to stick the beneficiaries with more of the bill."

The Medicare program is expected to serve over 44 million seniors and people with disabilities this year. House Democrats passed a proposal last year — the Children’s Health and Medicare Protection Act (CHAMP) - that would have strengthened Medicare, improved the program for low- and moderate-income seniors, and eliminated wasteful spending on private insurance companies that has flourished under the Bush Administration.

“I want to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries continue to have access to their doctor of choice, high-quality hospital care, and prescription drug services. And I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure Medicare continues to be the program seniors expect and want.”

Chairman Dingell held the gavel in 1965 when the House passed Medicare legislation.

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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