

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
AND
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

June 6, 2002

Who thinks \$350 billion is enough for Medicare
Prescription Drugs?

SENIORS DON'T!

Dear Colleague:

Recently, some have argued that \$350 billion over 10 years is adequate to provide a prescription drug benefit and modernize Medicare. They're wrong.

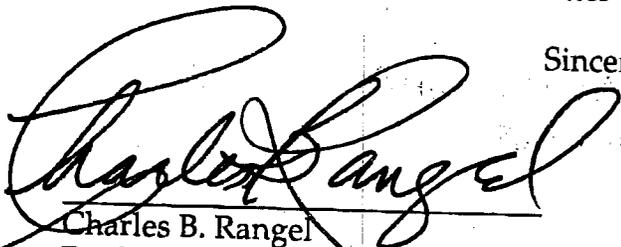
That's just the bare minimum some have calculated will buy them out of a political pickle in an election year so they can spend more of seniors' Social Security surplus money on tax cuts for their wealthy contributors. In fact, CBO has projected that prescriptions will cost seniors \$1.8 trillion over the next decade - a \$350 billion investment obviously falls far too short.

Let's stop playing politics with Medicare and prescription drugs. Our seniors face real problems that cannot wait any longer. Let's pass a meaningful prescription drug benefit this year that provides them long overdue relief.

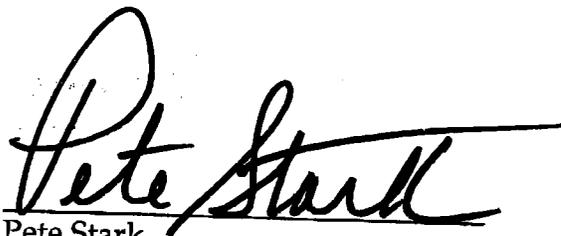
Medicare should cover prescription drugs like it does doctors' visits. Seniors should pay no more than a \$100 deductible, 20% cost sharing, and a low premium of no more than \$25 a month. In addition, seniors' out-of-pocket drug costs must be capped at a reasonable level of \$2000.

Adding such a benefit to Medicare will cost more than an arbitrary \$350 billion budget cap. Republicans seem perfectly willing to spend far above \$350 billion on tax cut extensions - it is all a matter of priorities.

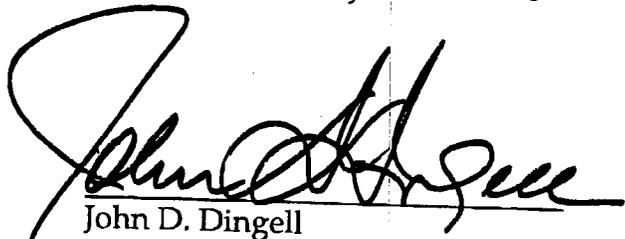
Sincerely,



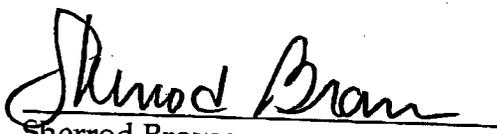
Charles B. Rangel
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Ways and Means



Pete Stark
Ranking Democrat
Subcommittee on Health
Ways and Means Committee



John D. Dingell
Ranking Democrat
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Sherrod Brown
Ranking Democrat
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and
Commerce