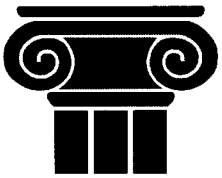
National Committee to Preserve



Social Security and Medicare

Barbara B. Kennelly
President &
Chief Executive Officer

March 13, 2003

Chairman W.J. Tauzin
House Energy and Commerce Committee
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Tauzin:

On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I write to express our support for strengthening the Medicaid program. Seniors comprise more than one-fourth of the Medicaid population and they account for more than three fourths of the program spending. Medicaid pays for both acute and long term care services for the elderly and provides essential wraparound coverage for low-income elders on Medicare.

We are concerned about the future of Medicaid. Most states have experienced state budget shortfalls of at least 6.3 percent in 2001. In turn, more than 32 states have reduced Medicaid benefits and some states are cutting eligible populations. We feel strongly that Medicaid is a safety net for seniors. If benefits and eligible populations are reduced, we are leaving them with no other alternative to receive acute and long-term health coverage. I hope that you and your Committee will urge Congress to take actions that will strengthen this program, not reduce coverage or benefits. We support immediate infusion of fiscal relief to states, specifically dedicated funds for healthcare, in order to avoid or reduce state cuts in health and social services for seniors.

We applaud you for your leadership in this area. Please let me know how we can further support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Barbara B. Kennelly

Barbara B. Kennelly

President

10 G street, NE, Suite 600 ♦ Washington, DC 20002-4215 ♦ 202 216-0420 ♦ www.ncpssm.org