



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0176-2006, **Version:** *

Res. No. 176

Resolution urging the federal government to extend the Medicare Part D registration deadline past May 15, 2006.

By Council Members Brewer, Comrie, Dickens, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Mark-Viverito, Nelson, Palma, Recchia Jr., Reyna, Seabrook, Stewart, Weprin and White Jr.

Whereas, The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the average per capita spending on prescription drugs by Medicare beneficiaries will exceed \$3,000 per year in 2006; and

Whereas, A study conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers found that 17% of Medicare beneficiaries lack protection against catastrophic drug costs, while another 28% have no drug coverage at all, leaving a significant number of elderly Americans unprotected against spiraling prescription drug costs; and

Whereas, In 2003, the United States Congress acted to address this issue when it passed the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act, which created the prescription drug discount program known as “Medicare Part D;” and

Whereas, Medicare Part D was designed to be fully implemented by 2006 and has an enrollment deadline of May 15, 2006, after which participants will be charged a higher premium; and

Whereas, According to the AARP, more than 42 million Americans are estimated to be eligible for Medicare Part D; and

Whereas, When the plan went into effect, the federal government estimated that at least 29 million people, or 68% of those eligible, would enroll; and

Whereas, According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 1.2 million Medicare beneficiaries in New York have no prescription drug coverage and only 413,003 New Yorkers have voluntarily enrolled in the Medicare

Part D; and

Whereas, A national poll of senior citizens conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 45% of respondents have an unfavorable view of the new drug benefit, and 61% of respondents understood the plan either “not too well” or “not well at all;” and

Whereas, In New York State alone, Medicare beneficiaries have 47 different eligible prescription drug plans to choose from; and

Whereas, This lack of understanding of the program and the extraordinary complexity of the program, including the large number of eligible prescription plans, has lead to widespread confusion and anxiety; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the federal government to extend the Medicare Part D registration deadline past May 15th, 2006.

LS# 365/540
JN
3/15/06