

# Congress Must Pass a Real Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit



## Congresswoman **Carolyn Maloney**



*Has a Plan to Strengthen Medicare and Add a Real Prescription Drug Benefit*

I support adding real prescription drug coverage to Medicare in order to help seniors with the high cost of their medication. That is why I am extremely disappointed to report that the legislation, H.R. 1, which the Republican Majority recently passed in the House, falls far short of what seniors and disabled Americans have been waiting for, and deserve.

For years, Democrats have pushed for a guaranteed prescription drug benefit in Medicare that is affordable, meaningful, and available to all seniors, regardless of where they live. Under the plan I support (H.R. 1199), medications would be covered just like doctors' visits and hospitalizations are today. My plan would add a drug benefit directly to Medicare, with the same deductible and copayment that seniors pay for their doctors' services today. It would also provide catastrophic coverage for out-of-pocket costs above \$2000 a year. This is help seniors need and deserve.

Congress of the United States  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business



*Carolyn B. Maloney*

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# The House Medicare Drug Bill Fails Seniors

Instead of strengthening Medicare and helping seniors with the cost of their medications, the House Republican Majority bill fails to meet the health care needs of seniors.

The House bill does nothing to reduce the cost of prescription drugs. It creates a coverage gap so wide that 50% of seniors will fall into it. Anyone paying between \$2000 and \$5000 for medications will receive no prescription drug benefit, even though they will continue to pay Medicare premiums.

What does the House bill do? It turns Medicare over to HMOs and the private health insurance industry. Seniors could lose the freedom



to choose their own doctor, and would not be guaranteed the same set of benefits that they get today. Much like before Medicare existed, a senior's ability to get the health care they need would depend on their ability to pay. The House bill also discourages employers from continuing to offer drug coverage for retired seniors who have already paid health insurance premiums throughout their working lives. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that one third of employers will drop retiree drug benefit coverage if the House bill becomes law.

No one should be forced to leave Medicare in order to get a prescription drug benefit. I came to Congress to strengthen Medicare, not dismantle it, and I will continue to fight these privatization efforts.

## ***Medicare Prescription Drugs:*** **Maloney Supported Alternative vs House Bill**

	<b>Maloney Alternative (H.R. 1199)</b>	<b>House Bill (H.R. 1)</b>
Guaranteed Lower Drug Prices	Yes	No
Guaranteed Minimum Prescription Drug Benefit	Yes	No
Guaranteed Monthly Premium	Yes	No
Fallback Prescription Drug Plan	Yes	No
Means Test for Beneficiaries	No	Yes
Coverage for Prescribed Medicines	Yes	Limited
Coverage Gap	No	Yes
Turns Medicare into a Voucher Program	No	Yes
Increases Costs for Doctors' Visits	No	Yes
Annual Deductible	\$100	\$250

**For more information on the Democratic alternative plan visit my website:  
[www.house.gov/maloney/medicare.html](http://www.house.gov/maloney/medicare.html)**

