

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 13, 2009

Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

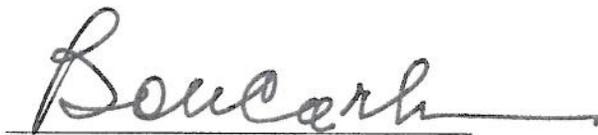
As you are well aware, over 45 million senior citizens across the country depend on Medicare for their health care needs. Unfortunately, Medicare's long-term financial stability is in serious jeopardy. A recent Medicare Trustee's Report projects that the Medicare Trust Fund will be insolvent in 2017 – two years earlier than was projected last year. This poses a serious threat to the viability of a program that is expected to cover almost 60 million in 2018. In all, Medicare already has nearly \$40 trillion in unfunded liabilities, and this number grows larger each year. We all want health care reform but taking money from Medicare to fund a new entitlement program is not an acceptable solution.

Securing the solvency of Medicare and protecting this critical health care program for our seniors must be a priority as we develop and consider legislation to improve our health care system. We believe that any potential monies found through Medicare reform should only be utilized to secure the financial stability of this program. Most Americans would agree that taking money from one program with urgent solvency problems to fund a huge expansion of health care benefits for others is not sensible.

While we all agree to the need for health care reform, the organizations and countries around the world that help America fund its debt are looking to us to solve the liabilities created by our insolvent entitlement programs and not use the monies from those programs to create additional entitlements.

We look forward to working with you in a bipartisan manner to prudently reform our health care system but oppose doing it in a way that increases the tremendous liabilities that exist with our other entitlement programs.

Sincerely,



Jim Bunning

David Vetter

Bob Bunker

Ray Winter

John Barrasso

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Jack Brock

J. Thum

Phil Martinez

Sally Claiborn

Jan E. Riel

Jim Clark

Mike Johnson

Tom Colvin

Mike Cropp

George V. Winovich

Lisa Mulvaney

John Thune

Jim A. Monti

John Warner

Chris Dodd

Richard Shelby

Key Bailey Pittman

John Ensign

Fred Cookman

John Cornyn

Richard Shelby

Jeff Sessions

Sam Brownback

Susan Collins

Jeff Sessions

Cc: Senator Max Baucus
Senator Ted Kennedy
Senator Chris Dodd