



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

# Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

## MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors  
Re: CMS administrator's departure  
Da: Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2006

Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, today made the following comment on the departure of Dr. Mark McClellan as administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Grassley was a key author of the legislation that created the Medicare prescription drug benefit. The *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act* was enacted in 2003. The drug benefit became available this year. The Finance Committee handles the President's nomination of the CMS administrator.

“Mark McClellan oversees the ongoing implementation of the biggest change to Medicare in its history. Starting up the drug benefit was the federal program equivalent of a Mars landing. There were bound to be some start-up problems, and glitches continue. Dr. McClellan has worked to fix the problems. I hope his departure doesn't cause delays in getting Part D snags fixed for beneficiaries and that he'll correct all known problems before he leaves. Of course, he should get credit for a lot of behind-the-scenes work to make sure millions of Medicare beneficiaries get their prescriptions filled smoothly. CMS is an important agency that reaches millions of Americans through Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs. It takes a skilled administrator to juggle the agency's competing interests of offering the highest possible level of service to beneficiaries while keeping down costs to preserve the programs for future beneficiaries. To meet these goals, I'd like to see the next administrator stay in the job as long as possible, through the end of the Bush administration.”