

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

March 9, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Madam Secretary:

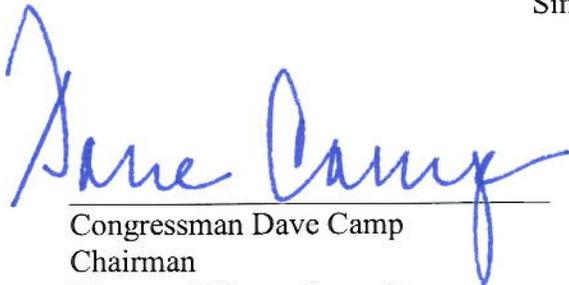
We were disappointed to read the letter that you sent to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus last night regarding the impact of H.R. 1 -- a bill to make responsible and necessary spending reductions -- on federal health care programs. Your baseless allegations about the impact this legislation would have on the Medicare program were especially concerning to us.

As Secretary of HHS, we know you understand that this appropriations bill does not change the fact that Medicare is a mandatory program, and therefore, seniors are still entitled to their full benefits under the law. We are disappointed you chose to send an inaccurate letter that is certain to create unwarranted confusion and fear amongst millions of seniors.

At a time when our nation is facing a spending crisis of historical proportions -- \$14 trillion national debt and a \$1.6 trillion annual budget deficit -- the responsible spending reductions of H.R. 1 are an important step towards greater fiscal responsibility. It is important that we have a serious dialogue on this critical issue, and the letter you sent to Chairman Baucus does not advance this shared goal.

We sincerely hope that the urgency with which this letter was sent to Chairman Baucus is also being applied in answering a growing backlog of serious questions from Members of Congress and state officials across the nation.

Sincerely,



Congressman Dave Camp
Chairman
Ways and Means Committee



Senator Orrin Hatch
Ranking Republican Member
Finance Committee

cc: Senator Max Baucus
Congressman Sander Levin