



September 21, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
S-230 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
S-221 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of our 38 million members and older Americans across this country, we are writing to express our strong opposition to efforts to roll back the Medicare Part D donut hole provisions included in the recently enacted Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2018. We are very concerned that there are attempts to weaken these donut hole improvements in upcoming opioid legislation. Reversing the progress made under current law will increase prescription drug costs for older Americans while providing a windfall of billions of dollars to the drug industry.

We hear all the time from older Americans struggling to afford needed medications. The improvements made to Part D in the BBA are critical to reducing both premiums and cost-sharing for seniors. According to a recent study, Part D beneficiaries are expected to save \$1.3 billion in out-of-pocket costs in 2019 alone.¹ Moreover, between 2020-2027, seniors are expected to save \$6.7 billion in out-of-pocket costs.² In 2015, Part D beneficiaries spent more than \$27 billion in out-of-pocket prescription drug costs.³ It should be no surprise that in recent polling, older Americans overwhelmingly (78%) supported requiring drug companies to contribute more to close the Medicare Part D coverage gap. With a median annual income of \$26,200 a year, Medicare beneficiaries desperately need relief from high drug costs.⁴

Any attempts to reduce or trade away the improvements made to Part D in the BBA, namely lowering the discount that drug companies must pay when a beneficiary is in the

¹ <http://www.milliman.com/insight/2018/How-will-the-Bipartisan-Budget-Act-of-2018-impact-Part-D-in-2019-and-beyond/>

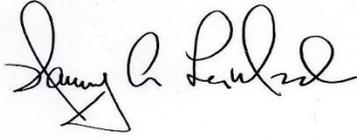
² <http://avalere.com/expertise/life-sciences/insights/impact-of-coverage-gap-discount-changes-in-budget-agreement>

³ http://www.medpac.gov/docs/default-source/reports/mar17_medpac_ch14.pdf

⁴ <https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/income-and-assets-of-medicare-beneficiaries-2016-2035/>

donut hole, will make it harder for seniors to afford the drugs they need. We urge you to stand with seniors and reject any attempt to roll back this progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy A. LeaMond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and "L".

Nancy A. LeaMond
Executive President and
Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer