

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4003

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Brief Description: Requesting the addition of a prescription drug benefit to Medicare.

Sponsors: Representatives Marine (co-prime sponsor), Darneille (co-prime sponsor), Skinner, Cody, Ballasiotes, Schual-Berke, Campbell, Conway, O'Brien, Haigh, Kenney, Ruderman, Kagi and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/9/01, 2/20/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Congress is requested to add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Campbell, Republican Co-Chair; Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Alexander, Ballasiotes, Conway, Darneille, Edmonds, Edwards, Marine, McMorris, Pennington and Ruderman.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

When the Medicare program was established in 1965 it did not include a prescription drug benefit . With the development and introduction of many new prescription drugs targeted to scores of diseases, prescription drugs has become an integral component of the health care system. Many senior citizens find that they cannot afford to purchase prescription drug coverage or afford the retail cost of purchasing their own drugs.

Summary of Bill:

The Congress is requested to add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: Prescription drugs play an increasingly important role in the health care delivery system. Senior citizens should have access to prescription drugs through the federal Medicare program.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Marine, co-prime sponsor; Representative Darneille, co-prime sponsor; Bruce Reeves, Senior Citizens Lobby; and Bob First, American Association of Retired Persons.