



September 30, 2010

Dear Representatives Kilroy and Thornberry -

MAPRx brings together beneficiary, family caregiver and health professional organizations committed to improving access to prescription medications and safeguarding the well-being of beneficiaries with chronic diseases and disabilities who are enrolled in the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D). On behalf of millions of Medicare beneficiaries with chronic conditions who rely on Part D for essential medications, MAPRx is extremely grateful for your sponsorship of H.R. 5732, The Part D Off-Label Prescription Parity Act.

MAPRx represents people facing the challenges of a broad spectrum of chronic conditions, from autoimmune diseases to neurological disorders to mental illnesses. Many have few or even no treatment options that address the specific condition, meaning patients and their doctors must rely on off-label use of medication to manage their condition. For those who rely on Part D for their prescription drug coverage, this places an enormous obstacle to obtaining effective treatment due to the prohibition against coverage of off-label use.

The legislation you have introduced would rectify this situation by authorizing off-label use when supported by clinical evidence in peer-reviewed literature. It would also protect beneficiaries against inappropriate off-label use by requiring a review and determination that the medication is appropriate for use in the patient's unique circumstances. Perhaps the most important function of the legislation is to reinforce the doctor-patient relationship by respecting such collaboration when choosing the best, most suitable course of treatment.

MAPRx strongly supports the Part D Off-Label Prescription Parity Act. It is a needed reform that will ensure equity for all Part D beneficiaries regardless of what medical condition they face. It will make a profound difference in the lives of countless patients through improved health and financial outcomes.

Your leadership on this critically important issue is laudable. If MAPRx can be of assistance in support of H.R. 5732, please contact Mary Beth Buchholz, MAPRx convener, at (202) 637-9732 ext 227.

Sincerely,

The AIDS Institute

The ALS Association
The Alzheimer's Association
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
Arthritis Foundation
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Easter Seals
The Lupus Foundation of America
Men's Health Network
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Family Caregivers Association
National Health Council
National Kidney Foundation
The National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Spinal Cord Injury Association
Parkinson's Action Network
RetireSafe
Spina Bifida Association
United Spinal Association