

## Stop Medicare Rationing of Life-Saving Care for Elders before It Begins



Senator Cornyn

**URGENT!** Please contact Texas' two U.S. Senators — Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn — and urge them to **OPPOSE** attacks on the Medicare private-fee-for-service option that will be considered in conference committee in September.

In order to protect senior citizens' lives, we must ensure their right to get unrationed medical care under Medicare (the federal health insurance program for seniors). The government must not prohibit older Americans from adding their own money, if they wish, to get unrationed insurance — which only the private-fee-for-service alternative gives them.

**See a sample message below.**



Senator Hutchison

### BACKGROUND

Before beginning the Congressional August recess, both the Senate and the House voted on different versions of reauthorization and expansion of a children's health program known by the acronym SCHIP. The Senate bill's expansion was financed by an increase in the tobacco tax and did not involve any changes to Medicare. The House bill, however, financed the expansion in part by extensive cuts to the part of the Medicare program that allows senior citizens to choose among private plans, currently known as "Medicare Advantage." Beyond these cuts, the House bill, adopted by a vote of 225 to 204, contained provisions that effectively end the private fee-for-service alternative that now gives older Americans the legal right to add their own money, if they choose, on top of the government contribution in order to obtain health insurance less likely to ration life-saving treatment. President Bush has threatened a veto of both versions.

The House and Senate versions now go to a conference committee containing both Senators and House Members. It is critically important that the House provisions attacking the private fee-for-service option be dropped by the conference committee.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

#### Senator John Cornyn

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov> (click on CONTACT)

Phone: 202-224-2934

Fax: 202-228-2856

#### Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison

<http://www.hutchison.senate.gov/contact.html>

Phone: 202-224-5922

Fax: 202-224-0776

NOTE: Since the 9/11, contacting members of Congress in Washington via U.S. mail is ineffective because of extensive screening. We encourage using email, fax, or phone.

### SAMPLE MESSAGE

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

*Please urge the S-CHIP conference committee to drop the attacks on the Medicare private-fee-for-service option. Please protect the rights of seniors to continue to purchase unrationed health insurance with their own money.*

Sincerely,

Your name

Your address