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Congressman Joins Governor McGreevey, Senator Corzine, And Others
To Discuss Legislation To Establish A Prescription Drug Benefit For All Seniors

Trenton, NJ - With the costs of prescription drugs for seniors continuing to soar, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) went to Trenton today to participate in a town hall meeting designed to address the importance of ensuring seniors' access to prescription drugs. Rothman, invited by the AARP to serve as a panelist, joined New Jersey Governor James McGreevey, U.S. Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ), and other members of the Congressional delegation for the program, which was sponsored by the AARP of New Jersey, at the War Memorial in Trenton.

"As we all know, the cost of today's, new life saving and life enhancing drugs continues to climb," Rothman said. "An estimated one-third of all seniors lack prescription drug coverage, while those lucky enough to have coverage face increasing expenses. I believe we must provide voluntary prescription drug coverage under Medicare to all seniors."

Rothman supports the establishment of a voluntary prescription drug benefit under Medicare for all seniors. Most recently, he supported a plan that would allow a senior to pay a lower monthly premium and a lower deductible than under an alternative plan that Republicans have offered. It would have guaranteed that seniors are not at the whim of the insurance industry raising their monthly premiums, or being passed from one insurance company to another, or dropped by the insurance companies altogether.

"President Bush and the Republicans have just proposed a \$674 billion tax cut that disproportionately gives breaks to the top 1 percent of Americans, on top of the \$1.35 trillion tax cut that did the same thing back in 2001," Rothman said. "Yet, if you were to ask the President where the money is for a comprehensive prescription drug plan for seniors, he tells you there's not enough money in the budget for a comprehensive drug program for seniors. A national prescription drug plan under Medicare would ensure that all of New Jersey's seniors have the medicines they need. This a priority that must be addressed, and I will continue to work tirelessly to win the prescription drug coverage under Medicare that New Jersey's and America's seniors deserve."

More than 1,000 seniors from around New Jersey attended the town hall meeting. AARP is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to addressing the needs and interests of persons 50 and older. There are 1.3 million AARP members in New Jersey and 35 million AARP members nationwide.

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Go back