

**Wally  
Herger**  
Congressman

**2nd District - California**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 15, 2005

CONTACT: DARIN THACKER  
(202) 225-3076

**Congressman Herger Encourages Sons and Daughters to Assist  
Their Parents in Finding Best Medicare Prescription Drug Plan**

**(WASHINGTON, DC)—Today is the first day America's seniors can sign up for the new Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit. Congressman Herger issued the following statement reminding them that they can now take advantage of this important new initiative:**

"The new prescription drug program offered by Medicare will help America's seniors meet the high costs of prescription drugs," Herger stated. "Everyone with Medicare is eligible for the coverage, regardless of income level and resources, pre-existing conditions, or current expenses. As they consider the individuals plans and decide whether to sign up, I encourage Northern California seniors to get as much information as possible and review it closely. They need to find a plan that is right for them and their particular circumstances. In that regard, I also encourage the sons and daughters of our nation's seniors to take an active role in helping to examine and understand the various plans and determine which is the best plan for their parents."

Sign up for the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit starts today, November 15, 2005. Seniors who sign up by December 31, 2005, will get coverage beginning January 1, 2006. Those who sign up after December 31, 2005, will receive coverage one month after sign-up. May 15, 2006 is the last day to sign up for coverage in 2006. Seniors who do not sign up during this period will have to wait until November 15, 2006 to join and may pay a penalty.

"Seniors or their families can contact Medicare by calling 1-800-MEDICARE or by visiting <http://www.medicare.gov> on the Internet for further information or to sign up," Herger continued. "They can also contact the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) by calling 1-800-434-0222. HICAP has taken a leading role in conducting informative workshops, which continue this month, to assist seniors in our area in choosing the best prescription drug plan for them," Herger concluded.

---

For more information, log on to <http://www.house.gov/herger> on the Internet!