

# AN UPDATE FOR SENIORS

## FROM CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK

---



*Constituents listen to a legislative update on senior issues*



*Congressman Sestak listens to a senior constituent's questions on affordable health care*



*District residents talk to representatives from the Social Security Administration during a summit sponsored by the Congressman*



## DEAR FRIEND,

*Thanks to advances in medical technologies, healthier living habits and a higher quality of life, America's seniors are living longer than ever. During my first term in office, I have worked both in Congress and the District not only to enhance the health security of our seniors, but also to ensure their economic and community security. My District Office caseworkers have closed more than 1,000 cases related to seniors, ranging from concerns about healthcare access to identity theft and housing problems. The following are some of the issues I have addressed on behalf of my senior constituents:*

### HEALTH SECURITY:

- **Introduced the Elder Abuse Victims Act** to protect America's seniors from physical, mental and financial abuse by addressing and correcting the failures in state elder abuse policies, creating specialized prosecution and research departments; establishing a Center for the Prosecution of Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation; training prosecutors and law enforcement to handle these unique cases; and funding Elder Abuse Victims' Advocacy Grants. I testified before the House Judiciary Committee in the first House hearing on elder abuse issues in 17 years, highlighting the fact that between one and two million Americans age 65 or older are victims of elder abuse.
- **Sponsored the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act** that requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate for lower drug prices for seniors, something they were forbidden to do previously.
- **Fought for seniors to have better health care in the "CHAMP" Act** by eliminating co-payments and deductibles for preventive services and initial preventive physical exams as well as free screening tests for glaucoma, prostate cancer, mammograms and others.
- **Co-sponsored the Alzheimer's Treatment and Caregiver Support Act** to provide grants to improve treatment services for Alzheimer's patients and expand training and support services for families and caregivers of the 4.5 million Americans who suffer from this disease.
- **Co-sponsored the Home Health Care Access Protection Act** which stops the implementation of the 11.75 percent payment cuts for Medicare home health services, because home health care workers provide complex care for approximately 7.6 million Americans with acute illnesses.
- **Co-sponsored the Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act** that includes measures for increasing Medicaid payments to hospitals and nursing homes that service Medicaid patients.
- **Co-sponsored the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act** which provides tax credits of up to \$500 for the purchase of hearing aids for qualifying individuals.
- **Co-sponsored the Geriatric Assessment and Chronic Care Coordination Act** that provides for Medicare Part B coverage of geriatric assessments and chronic care coordination services.

### ECONOMIC SECURITY:

- **Introduced The Small Business Entrepreneurial Development Programs Act of 2007**, enhancing critical programs like the Service Corps for Retired Executives (SCORE) which provides entrepreneurs with free counseling assistance from 10,500 volunteer counselors who are retired business people with more than 600 areas of expertise.
- **Supported legislation that temporarily waives the cap on federally insured reverse mortgages**, unique loans that enable senior homeowners to stay in their homes and remain financially independent by converting part of their home's equity without having to sell the home, give up the title or take on a new mortgage.
- **Co-sponsored the Social Security Fairness Act** which repeals two provisions of the Social Security Act that unfairly reduce the retirement benefits earned by public employees.

### COMMUNITY SECURITY:

- **Drafted and passed the Silver Scholarship Program in the House as an amendment to The Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education (GIVE) Act.** The Silver Scholarship program will provide a \$1,000 continuing education award to individuals over the age of 55 who commit to volunteering for 600+ hours a year.

## CONSTITUENT SERVICES:

*Below is just one example of the many cases that my District office has handled with regard to senior issues.*

Recently, an elderly gentleman who requires regular doctor's visits contacted my office for help with a medical billing problem he encountered after switching insurance companies. Although he had enrolled in a new insurance company, his old company continued to bill him for his frequent checkups. After my caseworkers engaged the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, he received a check from his insurance company that reimbursed him for his overpayments. Says one of my caseworkers: "As for any senior citizen, the threat of being without health coverage caused him great anxiety, and I was very pleased to have helped him, especially in light of the fact that this constituent was more than 90 years old."

***Please call us with any problem you might have.***



*Congressman Sestak and senior constituents discuss important senior and other issues together at a community event.*

## PROTECTING SENIORS FROM CONSUMER FRAUD:

**After hundreds of senior citizens were defrauded of their money in a scam involving Wachovia Bank this spring, I fought for proper restitution of their funds.** Though the bank wanted to reimburse the victims via a cumbersome and paperwork-heavy process, I strongly believed that as our seniors were seriously wronged, the reimbursement process should be as easy — and reliable — as possible. That is why I, along with Representatives Frank and Markey, filed an amicus brief with the U.S. District Court of Eastern Pennsylvania to ensure that Wachovia directly mailed reimbursement checks to our seniors who were defrauded. Following the filing of this brief, the U.S. Attorney's Office submitted a direct restitution plan for the defrauded seniors like the one my colleagues and I proposed.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS? Contact your local resource centers!

### Legal Help:

- Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania: 1-877-429-5994 or 610-874-8421
- Center for Resolutions: 610-566-7710
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: 215-440-2600

### Area Agencies on Aging provide a range of services to senior citizens, including home health services and medical assessments:

- Chester County: 610-344-6350
- Delaware County: 610-490-1300
- Montgomery County: 610-278-3601

### Housing Authorities provide access to Section 8 and low income housing:

- Chester County Housing Authority: 610-436-9200
- Delaware County Housing Authority: 610-490-6255
- Montgomery County Housing Authority: 610-275-5720

### Public Benefits provides help with needs based benefits, including Medicaid, food stamps, LIHEAP, and others:

- Chester County: 610-466-1000
- Delaware County: 610-447-5500
- Montgomery County: 610-270-3600

### Medicare:

- General Information: 1-800-MEDICARE
- Medicare Appeals: 1-800-322-1914

### Consumer and Credit Problems:

- Consumer Credit Counseling: 1-800-989-2227
- Consumer Complaints: 1-800-441-2555

### Community Action Agencies provide a range of services to people in need, such as housing assistance:

- Chester County: 610-344-6900
- Delaware County: 610-891-5101
- Montgomery County: 610-277-6363

### Transportation Resources provide rides for critical needs, including some medical appointments:

- Community Transit: 610-490-3960 or 610-490-3977



*Congressman Sestak meets with a senior community volunteer.*

CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK  
*invites you to*

**The 7th Congressional  
District Senior Summit and  
Service Fair**

**Wednesday, August 13, 2008**

**Registration: 12:30**

**Panel Discussion: 1:00 – 1:45**

**Service Fair: 2:00 – 4:00**

**Penn State Brandywine Campus  
Gymnasium  
25 Yearsley Mill Road  
Media, PA 19063**


*To register, please call 610-892-8623 or visit  
[www.sestak.house.gov/senior\\_signup.shtml](http://www.sestak.house.gov/senior_signup.shtml)*

All seniors are encouraged to attend this event, which will feature a panel discussion on the work my office has done on behalf of seniors — and what needs to be done in the future. The panel will be followed by a question-and-answer session and a service fair featuring representatives from local, state, federal and private senior service organizations.

**ATTENTION!**

Seniors in our district have been subjected to a wide variety of contacts by mail and telephone from fraudulent organizations claiming to be governmental groups. It is critical seniors protect themselves from identity theft by not providing any personal information. Seniors should contact the government organization or my office to determine if the material is produced by the government or a governmentally licensed entity.

Congressman Joe Sestak  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
1022 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

  
M.C.  
Prsrt Std

0023G08F

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

**For more information or help, please  
contact Congressman Joe Sestak's office:**

**WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE**  
1022 Longworth House  
Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-2011  
Fax: (202) 226-0280

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
600 N. Jackson Street  
Suite 203  
Media, PA 19063  
Phone: (610) 892-8623  
Fax: (610) 892-8628