

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) is pleased to release the latest data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that shows thousands of Medicare enrollees in Ohio's Sixth Congressional District are getting help with their high prescription drug costs.

As of October 1, 2010, 4,720 seniors in Ohio's Sixth District have received \$250 rebate checks. In total, these seniors have received \$1.2 million to help pay their high drug costs.

"Health care reform is helping thousands of seniors at home in Ohio," Wilson said. "That's what we said reform should do and that's what it is doing. I know that the cost of prescription medication is a source of extreme worry for seniors on fixed incomes and I'm pleased that we're on a path that will wipe that worry away."

An additional 4,480 seniors are expected to enter the Part D donut hole before the end of 2010. Each of these seniors will also receive a \$250 rebate. By the end of the year, 9,200 seniors in the district will have received assistance to help cover the cost of their drugs. The total amount of the assistance provided to seniors in the district will be \$2.3 million.

This direct help for seniors is a result of the Affordable Care Act. In March 2010, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law historic health care reform legislation. One of the immediate benefits of the new law is assistance to seniors with high drug expenses. This year, all seniors who have drug expenses of \$2,830 or more – and thereby enter the Medicare Part D "donut hole" – will receive a \$250 rebate to help with their high drug costs. Beginning in January 2011, all seniors will receive a 50% discount on brand-name drugs in the donut hole, saving the average senior entering the donut hole over \$500 annually. These discounts will save seniors in Ohio's Sixth District \$4.8 million next year.

The benefits to seniors with high drug costs improve on a regular basis under the health reform law. The discount on brand-name drugs increases to 52.5% in 2013 and to 55% in 2015. The savings continue to grow until the donut hole is completely eliminated for both brand-name and generic drugs in 2019.

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