

To: House Health Care Committee  
From: Main Street Alliance of Oregon Small Businesses  
Date: April 12, 2013  
Re: Letter in Support of HJM 14

Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee,

**Main Street Alliance of Oregon, a coalition of more than 1200 small businesses across Oregon, supports HJM 14.** As small business owners in Oregon we have noted with great concern that federal budget discussions have included cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. We wish to be clear: We strongly oppose such an approach and believe it to be both unnecessary and a no-growth policy for an economy that remains stagnant.

Medicare and Medicaid not only provide critical protections against the economic deprivation caused by illness, especially for older Americans; they also create jobs and boost an economy that is slumbering. Cutting these programs leads this country in the wrong direction.

We recognize that some in Congress may persist in their intent to unravel these critical programs for working families, the elderly, and the poor. If the Congress is unable to move forward without some compromise that reduces our national commitment to quality Medicare and Medicaid programs, there is a source for reductions that will not harm beneficiaries: the cost of prescription drugs.

The U.S. pays more for prescriptions than any nation in the world. Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries pay more for medicines than do our veterans and the clients of the National Indian Health Service. Why do these differences in cost persist? They do so because other countries, the VA, and the IHS negotiate the prices for prescriptions, while Medicare and Medicaid programs do not.

A recent report by the Inspector General of HHS discloses that over the next ten years, by permitting Medicare to use the same policies as are used by the VA, we could save the federal government \$230 billion, state governments \$31 billion and small businesses more that \$50 billion.

**The Main Street Alliance of Oregon urges you to join us in calling on Congress to empower Medicare to push back on unreasonable prescription drug costs**

Thank you for your time and consideration in this manner.

Yours respectfully,



Jim Houser, Co-Chair  
Hawthorne Auto Clinic, Portland



Mark Kellenbeck, Co-Chair  
BrainJoy LLC, Medford