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**TIMOTHY J. WALZ**  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
FIRST DISTRICT, MINNESOTA  
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January 9, 2012

TOLL FREE #:  
(877) 846-9259

The Honorable Jon Leibowitz  
Chairman  
Federal Trade Commission  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20580

Dear Chairman Leibowitz:

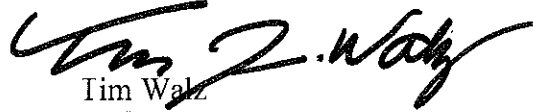
As the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) considers the potential merger of two of the three major pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), Express Scripts and Medco, I ask that you please take into account potential implications for small businesses and patients in rural areas.

In Minnesota, community pharmacies are extremely important patient resources and support the local economy of rural areas. For many elderly and chronically ill patients, one-on-one interaction with their local pharmacist often serves a variety of purposes. Pharmacists are sometimes the only medical professional these patients interact with on a consistent basis, they take the time to ensure patients understand their complicated medication regimens, and are available to answer questions. The New England Health Institute estimated that the improper use of medicine adds \$290 billion a year to unnecessary health care expenses. Our community pharmacists can help bridge this gap.

I am concerned the Express Scripts-Medco merger could force many small pharmacies to go out of business, leaving a void of services in many rural communities. Small pharmacies operate on very thin margins and often do not have the bargaining power to negotiate with their PBM. I fear a consolidation of these two PBMs could further exacerbate this problem. The closure of local pharmacies means a loss to rural economies, and a greater reliance on mail-order or long distance travel to fill badly needed prescriptions. While mail-order may seem to have many conveniences and efficiencies, it has many draw-backs as well. There is much anecdotal evidence of expensive prescription drugs being sent to deceased individuals. This simply adds to the waste, fraud, and abuse that can occur in our health care system.

I am confident that you will conduct a full investigation of the impacts of this merger before making a decision. While you may have heard arguments from Express Scripts and Medco on how their merger can save billions, I ask that you take into consideration the health care implications on rural America. This merger has the potential to negatively impact patients, consumer choice, and local economies. Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim J. Walz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "W".

Tim Walz  
Member of Congress