

Administrative Office
521 E 63rd Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64110-3329
Telephone: [816] 756.3140
FAX: [816] 756.3144



Government Affairs Office
1600 Prince Street, Suite 100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2836
Telephone: [703] 519.7910
FAX: [703] 519.3865

Mr. Charles B. Sewell
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
National Community Pharmacists Association
100 Daingerfield Road
Alexandria, VA 22314

November 7, 2007

Dear Mr. Sewell:

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) is pleased to endorse three key legislative initiatives fostered by NCPA in the U.S. House and Senate addressing the major challenges facing community pharmacies. These initiatives include prompt payment in Medicare Part D, fair reimbursement under Medicaid and the ability of independents to negotiate with the Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) who manage prescription drug plans.

On prompt payment in Medicare, NHRA supports H.R.1474, *the Fair and Speedy Treatment of Medicare Prescription Drug Act of 2007*, and S.1954, *the Pharmacy Access Improvement Act (PhAIM) of 2007*. These similar House and Senate bills resolve cash flow problems for independent pharmacies by requiring Part D plans to promptly pay all properly submitted electronic claims.

On Medicaid reimbursement, NHRA supports H.R.3140, *the Saving Our Community Pharmacies Act* and S.1951, *the Fair Medicaid Drug Payment Act of 2007*, which ensure adequate payment to community pharmacies for the generic drugs they dispense. For patient access to be preserved, especially in rural communities, pharmacies should not be forced from the Medicaid program by underpayments.

In addition, NHRA backs the companion bills in the House and Senate—H.R. 971, *the Community Pharmacy Fairness Act of 2007*, and S.2161, which bears the same title. These bills place community pharmacies on a level playing field when offered take-it-or-leave-it contracts by the PBMs.

The National Rural Health Association is dedicated to ensuring rural Americans have access to quality health care, including the vital role community pharmacies play in delivering prescription drug services. Misguided federal policies should not threaten the community pharmacists' ability to remain in business, nor should patients' health be put at risk.

We are pleased to offer this endorsement of your legislative efforts, and look forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George N. Miller".

George Miller
President

www.NRHArural.org