



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Federal legislation (hereinafter, "the Medicare  
3 drug bill") purporting to assist Medicare beneficiaries with  
4 prescription drug costs was signed into law on December 8,  
5 2003; and

6 WHEREAS, The Congressional Budget Office has estimated  
7 that 2.7 million retirees will lose employer coverage as a  
8 result of the aforementioned legislation; and

9 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill will provide benefits that  
10 are inferior to most employer coverage or to Illinois' Circuit  
11 Breaker and SeniorCare programs; and

12 WHEREAS, Under the Medicare drug bill, millions of  
13 beneficiaries without drug coverage will face higher  
14 out-of-pocket drug costs, while a beneficiary with \$5,100 in  
15 out of pocket drug costs will receive only \$1,080 in benefits;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Prescription drug prices are far higher in the  
18 United States than they are in Canada or other industrialized  
19 nations; and

20 WHEREAS, Skyrocketing drug costs will rapidly erode the  
21 already inadequate benefit to be provided by the Medicare drug  
22 bill; and

23 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill prohibits the federal  
24 government from negotiating with the pharmaceutical companies  
25 for lower prices and effectively bans re-importation of  
26 affordable prescription drugs from Canada or other nations; and

27 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill diverts billions of dollars  
28 into subsidies for HMOs and insurance companies,

1 discriminating against beneficiaries who choose to stay in  
2 fee-for-service Medicare; and

3 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill increases out-of-pocket  
4 costs and reduces coverage for poor seniors and disabled  
5 persons who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid; and

6 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill lays the groundwork for  
7 privatization of Medicare and elimination of Medicare's  
8 program of guaranteed benefits for the elderly and disabled;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, The Medicare drug bill represents a victory for  
11 special interests rather than for seniors and the disabled;  
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
14 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
15 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we call upon the United States  
16 Congress to replace the Medicare drug bill with legislation  
17 that empowers the federal government to address spiraling drug  
18 prices, that provides a meaningful drug benefit, and that does  
19 not undermine beneficiaries' freedom of choice; and be it  
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to each  
22 member of the Illinois Congressional delegation, to the Speaker  
23 of the United States House of Representatives, and to the  
24 President of the United States Senate.