



Thomas A. Schatz
President

June 22, 2011

U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator,

Senators Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) will soon introduce the Medicare and Medicaid Fighting Fraud and Abuse to Save Taxpayer Dollars (FAST) Act. On behalf of the more than one million members and supporters of the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW), I urge you to support this legislation.

Each year, Americans lose tens of billions of their hard-earned tax dollars to Medicare and Medicaid waste, fraud and abuse. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) estimated that there was nearly \$48 billion in improper payments for Medicare and \$22.5 billion in the federal share of improper payments in Medicaid in fiscal year 2010. These figures are just the tip of the iceberg and do not include the countless, undocumented occurrences of theft carried out by organized crime rings aimed at defrauding Medicare, the stealing and selling of beneficiary numbers on the black market, and the creation of front groups and fake doctors' offices that cheat the system at the taxpayers' expense.

The FAST Act aims to curb improper payments, improve data sharing across agencies and programs, keep closer track of individuals and entities that commit fraud, and improve the contractor performance at CMS. The legislation would require valid national provider identifiers of prescribers on pharmacy claims; encourage the establishment of State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs; enforce closer tracking of controlled substance providers; prohibit the display of Social Security numbers on new identification cards; conduct a smart card pilot program; expand automated prepayment review of Medicare claims; and develop measurable performance metrics for Medicare Contractors. These reforms target the root of the problem and are an important step toward mitigating the egregious exploitation of Medicare and Medicaid.

The Carper-Coburn legislation lays out commonsense solutions to rein in system abuses and protect taxpayers from having their Medicare and Medicaid funds pillaged. I strongly urge you to support this important legislation. With a \$14.4 trillion national debt, lawmakers can no longer afford to ignore ballooning entitlement costs. All votes on the FAST Act will be among those considered in CCAGW's *2011 Congressional Ratings*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Schatz". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Suite 1075
Washington, D.C. 20004
202-467-5300