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LARSON: AMERICAN SENIORS NEED A PRESCRIPTION FOR CHANGE
Democratic plan would fix flaws in Medicare prescription drug program

WASHINGTON, DC ♦ U.S. Representative John B. Larson (CT-1) joined House Democrats this week to introduce a ♦Prescription for Change♦ to address the flaws in the Medicare prescription drug benefit, otherwise known as Medicare Part D. Several provisions are based on legislation introduced by Larson.

♦Its time for Medicare to offer a prescription drug benefit that is simple, affordable, and reliable,♦ stated Larson. ♦Our seniors shouldn♦t have to worry about 44 different plans, donut holes, and deadlines. We♦re turning them into refugees from their own healthcare system. These Democratic proposals would lower drug prices for seniors and give them peace of mind.♦

Larson has been a leading proponent in the House for allowing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical companies to achieve discounts for Medicare beneficiaries. He has also introduced the Medicare Prescription Drug Flexibility for Seniors Act (H.R. 4410) to extend the initial enrollment period by 2 years, allow beneficiaries to change Medicare drug plans if the plan sponsor alters its formulary, and penalizes retirement health plans that provide misleading information about their coverage.

The Democratic Prescription for Change would:

- Based on Larson's Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act (H.R. 2685), require Medicare to leverage its bargaining power and negotiate lower prices with drug companies
 - Help close the "donut hole" by dedicating the cost savings from price negotiation toward ending the coverage gap
 - Allow seniors to choose a plan administered directly by Medicare
 - Extend the enrollment deadline to December 31st without penalty
 - Stop drug plans from increasing co-payments and creating burdensome administrative hurdles during the year
 - Ensure moderate-income Medicare beneficiaries get the drug coverage assistance they need by eliminating complex barriers

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