

(Washington, DC) - **Congressman Wally Herger (CA-02) today issued a statement commending President-elect Obama for his public comments regarding the pressing need to address entitlement reform.** While announcing the creation of a chief performance officer post, the President-elect promised to make entitlement reform a “central part” of his efforts toward deficit reduction. The Congressional Budget Office today estimated the Fiscal Year 2009 deficit at \$1.2 trillion. Herger’s remarks follow below:

"I commend President-elect Obama for acknowledging the need to reform entitlement programs and for his commitment today to address this looming crisis. Currently, Social Security and Medicare are on an unsustainable fiscal course. In fact, according to the most recent estimates, the Medicare Trust Fund will run out of money within the next decade. I believe President Bush deserves credit for working to address one component of this larger problem in 2005, Social Security. Regrettably, that effort was met with a great deal of partisan opposition in the House and Senate, and in the meantime, the problem has only gotten worse. The pressing need to reform these programs and avert a fiscal calamity for our children and grandchildren cannot be ignored, and doing so will require a bipartisan effort.

"Therefore, I was extremely disappointed that House Democratic leaders chose, when setting the rules for the 111th Congress this week, to waive a law requiring Congress to consider measures to alleviate Medicare's funding shortfall. With the unfunded liabilities of Social Security and Medicare rising by about \$2 trillion every year, we do not have the luxury of postponing this debate to a future session of Congress. I urge House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to heed President-elect Obama's warnings and join those of us committed to pursuing entitlement reform effort in 2009. I look forward to working with the President-elect to find a reasonable, lasting solution to this serious problem."