

Knowing of your interest in health care issues, I wanted to let you know that the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees report issued today warned that Medicare is approaching insolvency much earlier than previously expected. This report clearly demonstrates that the need for serious entitlement reform has never been more urgent. Due to the recession, the Medicare Hospital Insurance Trust Fund is now expected to run out of money in 2017, two years earlier than previous estimates. Medicare's unfunded liabilities now represent a debt of \$125,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. As Congress debates health care reform, determining how we will keep the promises we have already made to current and future seniors is one of my top priorities.

For years, budget analysts and others have warned that the growth of entitlement programs represents a looming fiscal crisis for our country. Too often, Congress has ignored this reality for reasons of political expediency. Just a few months ago, over the objections of House Republicans, the House of Representatives voted to do away with an early-warning system that would have forced a debate and solutions in Congress when growth in Medicare spending exceeds a defined threshold. This latest Trustees' Report should serve as a wake-up call that it's time to put the partisan rhetoric and politics as usual aside and do what is right for future generations.