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**Iowa Citizen Action Network Applauds Senator Harkin for Standing  
Up for Seniors and People with Disabilities,  
Opposing Medicare Privatization Plan**

**Des Moines** “This morning the Congress passed Medicare prescription drug bills that put seniors and people with disabilities at the Mercy of HMO s and insurance plans. We applaud Senator Harkin for standing up for Iowa’s most vulnerable citizens by voting no to the Senate’s prescription drug sham,” said Deb Stehr, vice president of Iowa Citizen Action Network.

Nationwide, the 40 million Americans who rely on Medicare for a drug benefit would get a much smaller benefit than the generous benefits enjoyed by Members of Congress. Almost half of the people on Medicare would lose money under the Senate-passed plan, and would be forced into private insurance plans that have already dumped 2.4 million seniors from Medicare. Medicare beneficiaries with high drug costs would have to pay the full amount if their total cost for prescription drugs is between \$4,500 and \$5,800 a year. It is estimated that about 4.7 million people would fall into this coverage gap.

“Thank you, Senator Harkin, for your courage in standing up for seniors and people with disabilities. Just because Congress gave in to HMOs and the insurance industry, the fight to preserve Medicare, the nation’s most effective health care system, is not over yet,” said Lisa Davis-Cook, co-director of Iowa Citizen Action Network.

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Iowa Citizen Action Network is an affiliate of USAction, the nation’s largest progressive consumer organization, dedicated to winning social and economic justice for all. USAction represents three million members in 33 affiliates, with statewide organizations in 23 states.