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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

May 24, 2001

**The Honorable Michael McMullan**  
**Acting Administrator**  
**Health Care Financing Administration**  
**7500 Security Boulevard**  
**Baltimore, Maryland 21244**

Dear Administrator McMullan:

Today, I am introducing a bill to change the filing date of the adjusted community rate (ACR) for Medicare+Choice plans from July 1 to the third Monday in September. A copy of the bill is attached. Each year plans must decide whether to stay in the program. This complex decision is made needlessly more difficult by requiring it be made by July 1, well before enough data is available to forecast costs for the coming year. This change will give plans more accurate data on which to base their benefit decisions. In addition, this later date will give plans a better sense of whether Congress will enact legislation to change the payment or regulatory environment for Medicare+Choice.

My staff has had several conversations with HCFA staff, and have been assured this change will grant HCFA sufficient time to approve the ACR and put all plan information on Medicare's web site or have it available through a toll free number by the time open enrollment starts on November 1. As you know HCFA staff presently believe this change may mean that plan summary information will not be sent to beneficiaries along with their Medicare handbook. Therefore, I want to work with you to ensure they do receive written information about plans, benefit design and any cost sharing so they can make informed decisions during the open enrollment period in November.

In addition, because it will take time to move this bill through the legislative process, I encourage you to do all in your authority to move the ACR date administratively to send a strong message to health plans that the Administration supports Medicare+Choice and the additional options the program provides seniors and the disabled.

Sincerely,



Nancy L. Johnson  
Chairman

Attachment