

The Honorable William M. Thomas
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0522

Letter sent by electronic mail, hard copy to follow.

Dear Chairman Thomas:

Albertsons, Inc., appreciates your unwavering leadership in the modernization of Medicare to provide an all important out-patient prescription drug benefit.

This year's Medicare reform legislation provides an historic opportunity to both increase the quality of care and provide a new pharmaceutical benefit for our nation's seniors. Albertsons is honored to support the bill you and your Committee have developed.

For the first time, the bill specifically opens the opportunity to provide seniors with a pharmacy benefit to a wider range of competitive entities. Retail pharmacies, pharmaceutical manufacturers and others, along with the traditional prescription benefit managers, will be able to offer seniors drug benefits and discount programs.

I also appreciate the forthrightness of the discussions with your staff on risk. The draft bill clearly recognizes that pharmacies cannot be held responsible for risks they do not manage and bars benefit managers from forcing their risk down to retail pharmacies. I am encouraged that the bill will also allow retail pharmacies to compete to fill 90-day, long-term prescriptions. Many seniors will benefit from the convenience of filling these prescriptions at their neighborhood pharmacy.

I commend your determined actions to bring a bill to the President this year. While there are inevitable details to be considered – I encourage you to seize the chance at achieving the higher purpose of your efforts.

With Best Regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Johnston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Addendum: ABS profile