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June 5, 2003

The Honorable Bill Thomas
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thomas:

The Food Marketing Institute (FMI), on behalf of our supermarket members who operate more than 12,000 in-store pharmacy departments, wishes to express our industry's strong support for legislation that you have developed to reform Medicare and provide seniors with a meaningful outpatient drug benefit.

Your initiative embraces a number of vital principles that will allow for more competition and choices for seniors in the delivery of medications through alliances with retail pharmacies, pharmaceutical manufacturers and other entities. Moreover, this important bill will clarify that community pharmacies will be able to offer Medicare recipients the option to receive long-term, 90-day prescriptions which gives seniors both convenience and the opportunity to consult with their pharmacist about taking their medications safely and effectively.

Additionally, it is our understanding that your initiative includes provisions that will generate information that will allow seniors to make informed decisions in terms of selecting a plan that best meets their individual needs for medications. FMI is further encouraged that the legislation seeks to ensure that seniors have convenient access to prescription drugs through pharmacy networks and that pharmacies are not placed at risk under this new benefit.

In closing, FMI wishes to commend you on your leadership regarding Medicare reform, and our industry looks forward to working with you throughout the legislative process as Congress moves toward providing seniors with outpatient drug coverage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John J. Motley III', is written over a horizontal line.

John J. Motley III
Senior Vice President
Government and Public Affairs



YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SUPERMARKETS