

RICHARD G. LUGAR
INDIANA

306 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
202-224-4814

senator_lugar@lugar.senate.gov

COMMITTEES:
FOREIGN RELATIONS, CHAIRMAN
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1401

March 11, 2006

Dear Friends:

I commend each of you gathered today for your commitment to improving access to quality, affordable health care. The availability of affordable, quality health care is certainly an issue of great importance to our nation. Your participation in the Citizens' Health Care Working Group is a vital component to the health care policy discussions occurring in Congress.

With the passage of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, significant changes have been made to our health care system. For example, the Act created a new Medicare prescription drug program and as of January 1 of this year, all seniors are now able to receive Medicare prescription drug coverage. The Act also created Health Savings Accounts that were established as a new version of Medicare Savings Accounts. Finally, the Act directed the formation of the Citizens' Working Group as a recognition among lawmakers that, though much progress has been made in health care reform, there is still more work to be done.

I regret that I am unable to be with you today, but I am confident that your discussion will be rich with insight. I look forward to reviewing the Citizens' Health Care Working Group's final report when it is submitted to Congress.

Sincerely,



Richard G. Lugar
United States Senator