

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Open Enrollment for 2011 Medicare Plans Begins Today**

*Congresswoman Matsui Encourages Sacramento Seniors to Take Advantage of the Annual Open Enrollment Period*

**WASHINGTON, DC**– Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) encouraged Sacramento seniors to take advantage of the start of the 2011 Open Enrollment Period for Medicare prescription drug and health coverage, which begins today, November 15th. Open enrollment is the time every year when individuals with Medicare can review, and, if necessary, change their current health coverage plan. Additionally, Americans in Original Medicare, the traditional Medicare fee-for-service program, who do not have prescription drug coverage can enroll in a prescription drug plan or health plan that offers drug coverage. This opportunity only occurs once a year.

“With the passage of health care reform last March, additional Medicare benefits, including free wellness checkups and half-off brand name drugs in the donut hole coverage gap, have taken effect,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “With this in mind, the 2011 open enrollment period is more important than ever. I encourage all of the Sacramento Medicare beneficiaries to take this opportunity to review their coverage and ensure that they are getting the health care coverage that meets their needs.”

From today through December 31st, Medicare beneficiaries nationwide can go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to make changes and review their coverage. Congresswoman Matsui also encourages Medicare enrollees to sign up as soon as possible to ensure that their prescription drug coverage is available January 1st, 2011.

California residents may also contact the [Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program \(HICAP\)](#), which is a local resource for seniors to help them choose a Medicare plan. Individuals may schedule an appointment to see a counselor at their local HICAP site, or if they are homebound, can arrange for an HICAP counselor to come see them in their home. The Sacramento County HICAP office is [located](#) at 3950 Industrial Blvd., Suite 500 in West Sacramento. HICAP can be reached by calling 1-800-434-0222.

For more information on how Congresswoman Matsui is working every day to strengthen and improve Medicare and other issues important to Sacramento seniors, visit [www.matsui.house.gov/seniors](http://www.matsui.house.gov/seniors)

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