

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Canandaigua Academy Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to Stephen J. Uebbing,

superintendent, Canandaigua City School District; and Mayor Ellen Polimeni of Canandaigua, NY.

Remarks Following a Visit to Ferris Hills at West Lake Senior Center in Canandaigua

March 14, 2006

The reason I have come is I'm trying to explain to people the benefits of a new Medicare program. Congressman Randy Kuhl asked me to come, and so I did. It shows how influential he is.

I thought the system needed to be changed because it didn't provide a modern form of medicine. A lot of it was good, but some of it was stuck in the past. And so I worked with Congress to get a prescription drug benefit added on to Medicare. The problem is, is that when something changes, people get a little concerned. You know, they say, "Well, I'm not so sure I want to see a change; I'm not so sure change is something that I'm interested in." And I knew that was going to be the case.

But I also knew that if we could convince people who pay attention to take a look and see what options were available, that people would begin to make rational choices, particularly if they had some help. And so I want to thank the Thompson Health Care Group for helping. And as I said at the high school over there, I said,

"If your mom or dad could use a little Medicare, you owe them the opportunity to explain different options and show what's available." But the pharmacists are helping a lot to say, "Look, you ought to take a look at the program."

So we're in your community to urge people to, you know, kind of step back, see what's available, design a program that meets your needs, if that's your interest, and it's going to save some money. That's the key, because this—the benefit is costing less than anticipated, as a result of competition and choice. It's really worthwhile looking at.

I've spent a lot of time, as my administration spends a lot of time, talking about how to get people—information into people's hands. And so that's why we're here. Thank you for giving us a chance to come by and visit with you. It looks like you've got a beautiful facility.

Okay, well, thanks to the press for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:09 p.m.

Remarks on Medicare Prescription Drug Benefits and a Question-and-Answer Session in Silver Spring, Maryland

March 15, 2006

The President. Listen, thank you all for coming. First of all, I'm proud to be traveling with a Cabinet Secretary. He runs Health and Human Services. His job is to

make sure that the Medicare plan works the way it was designed to work.

We've come to answer some questions, if you have any—about any subject.