

Congressman John Sarbanes endorses LifeSpan's Honor the Promise Campaign

February event draws large crowd demanding focus on senior care

(Columbia, Md.) - February 23, 2007 - Maryland Democratic Congressman John Sarbanes endorsed LifeSpan's Honor the Promise Campaign to a large crowd gathered earlier this month at Roland Park Place, a Baltimore senior care center.

LifeSpan represents more than 300 member organizations and 45,000 seniors throughout Maryland and the Metropolitan D.C. area.

LifeSpan President Isabella Firth explained the Honor the Promise Campaign called for four Key Action Items, among them: improving quality of care by stabilizing funds for all senior care organizations; expediting Maryland's Medicaid eligibility process by updating the state's antiquated computer systems; create new workforce incentives to address a shortage of caregivers and reduce regulatory and administrative burdens placed on senior care providers.

In announcing his support for Honor the Promise Campaign, Sarbanes noted from personal experience that the four Key Action Items were mainstream initiatives and that the campaign deserved support for bringing support and focus on senior issues.

"I am very aware of the shortage of caregivers we are facing," said Sarbanes. "And we need people that are trained and eager to support our seniors. Anything we can do to support bringing in more caregivers is critical."

Sarbanes also endorsed updating computer systems that slow Medicaid eligibility and added at the federal level it was essential that Medicaid rates are set at a rate that will ensure health care providers participation. The congressman encouraged others to support the Honor the Promise campaign and to get involved as advocates regarding senior issues.

Sarbanes said on a statewide level, he was confident the new governor and his administration will bring a new focus, emphasis and support for seniors.

Maryland State Delegates Shawn Tarrant and Barbara Robinson also addressed those assembled as did Deborah Roane representing Secretary Baker from the Maryland Department of Aging.

"We are proud and grateful to have the support of Congressman Sarbanes and other elected representatives," said Firth. "By endorsing our campaign, they exhibit an understanding of the issues facing Maryland seniors, their families and loved ones."

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