

# MICHIGAN CARPENTERS' FRINGE BENEFIT FUNDS

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Michigan Carpenters' Health Care Fund  
Michigan Carpenters' Pension Fund  
Michigan Carpenters' Apprenticeship & Training Fund

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November 2005

RE: MICHIGAN CARPENTERS' HEALTH CARE FUND

TO: ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SUPPLEMENT TO MEDICARE PROGRAM

Dear Participant:

We, the Trustees of the Michigan Carpenters Health Care Fund ("Plan"), are writing to inform you of IMPORTANT INFORMATION about how the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit will affect you. You may have already heard about the new Part D prescription drug benefit available from Medicare beginning on January 1, 2006 and you may even have received information from Medicare about this benefit.

**Because you do not have current prescription drug benefits through Michigan Carpenters Health Care Fund you should consider enrolling in the Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage**

Under the new Medicare Part D law, if you have prescription drug coverage that is as good as or better than that available under a Medicare prescription drug plan you will not be penalized with higher premium costs if you later decide to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, unless you allow a 63-day or more gap between coverage under this Plan and Medicare Part D. **Since the Fund does not provide prescription drug coverage for participants on the Supplement to Medicare program, you do not have coverage through the Fund that is at least as good as or better than that available through Medicare.**

Because you do not have existing prescription drug coverage that, on average, is as good as Medicare coverage, you will be penalized if you do not enroll in the Medicare Part D coverage

## **63-Day Rule**

You should also know that if you do not enroll in the Medicare prescription drug coverage, you may pay more to enroll in the Medicare prescription drug coverage later. For example, if after May 15, 2006, you decide to enroll in the Medicare prescription drug coverage; your monthly premium will go up at least 1% per month for every month after May 15, 2006 that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without coverage, your premium will always be at least 19% higher than what most other people pay. You'll have to pay this higher premium as long as you have Medicare coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until November 2006 or later to enroll.

## **For More Information**

In the event you would like more detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage, you can look in the “*Medicare & You 2006*” handbook, which is supposed to be available beginning in October 2005. You should get a copy of that handbook in the mail from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare prescription drug plans. You can also get more information about Medicare prescription drug plans from the Medicare website at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see your copy of the “*Medicare & You*” handbook for their telephone number), or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For people with limited income and resources, extra help paying for a Medicare prescription drug plan is available. Information about this extra help is available from the Social Security Administration (SSA). For more information about this extra help, visit SSA online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

Sincerely,

Michigan Carpenters Health Care Fund  
Board of Trustees

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