

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

DON'T CUT Medicare Advantage

Medicare Advantage *is* Medicare. Don't Jeopardize Health Access for Seniors and People with Disabilities.

More than 60 Senators from both parties recently wrote to the U.S. Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [asserting](#) that Congress backs Medicare Advantage. Just a few days later, however, the Administration proposed cuts to the program that could threaten benefits for Medicare Advantage enrollees.

Seniors and people with disabilities deserve affordable access to care – and for Washington to keep its promises to them.

President Biden's State of the Union Address highlighted his commitment to protecting Medicare, and his push to Republicans to affirm their support for Medicare resulted in a bipartisan show of support for the program. Now is not the time for Medicare cuts.

Nearly half of Medicare recipients, more than 30 million seniors and people with disabilities, benefit from the coverage and care provided by Medicare Advantage. Medicare Advantage *is* Medicare.

Here is what policymakers, industry leaders and seniors are saying about the proposed changes to Medicare Advantage that would materialize in the form of fewer benefits and higher out of pocket costs:

WTAS: Policymakers

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NM) **said:**

"I'm confident the White House understands this, given their proposal, and look forward to working together to make sure Medicare Advantage can continue to meet patients' health care needs."

Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV) [tweeted:](#) "Medicare Advantage is a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of Nevadans, providing quality health care to seniors and individuals with disabilities. I joined @SenCortezMasto in calling on the Biden Administration to continue support for this vital program."

Senator Katie Britt (R-AL) [said:](#) "It is crucial that we meet our obligations to the hardworking families and retirees who have paid into Social Security and Medicare their entire careers. Over half of all Alabamians who are eligible for Medicare choose Medicare Advantage."

Senator Tom Cotton (R-AK) [tweeted:](#) "It's President Biden who is proposing to cut Medicare Advantage, a program used by almost 4 in 10 Arkansas seniors."

Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) [tweeted:](#) "I'm urging the @JoeBiden admin to protect Montanans' access to Medicare Advantage. 25% of Montanans, as well as millions of seniors & disabled Americans across the US, rely on this program. They should be allowed to choose a plan that works for them."

"The number of Americans who choose Medicare Advantage continues to grow each year, with enrollment doubling over the last decade, resulting in Medicare Advantage serving nearly 50 percent of individuals eligible for Medicare," [wrote a bipartisan group of more than 60 Senators.](#) "In 2023, average Medicare Advantage premiums will fall to a 16-year low of \$18 per month and beneficiaries will have access to vital financial protections, including out-of-pocket spending limits and often prescription drug coverage for no additional premium."



Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL) [tweeted](#):

“Newsflash: President Biden is cutting Medicare, not Republicans. Fact: He’s slashing more than \$3 billion from Medicare Advantage (used by over 50% of seniors) next year. I just cosponsored @RepDLesko’s legislation reaffirming my commitment to these vitally important programs.”

Representative Robert Aderholt (R-AL) [tweeted](#): “Biden just cut Medicare Advantage. The Democrats want to either raise taxes to pay for Medicare and Social Security or they want to do nothing which will mean cutting vital benefits. Both are WRONG.”

Representative Brian Mast (R-FL) [blasted](#) Biden for “a gross political lie. He’s the one who just cut billions from Medicare Advantage.”

WTAS: Industry Leaders

Mary Beth Donahue, President and CEO of the Better Medicare Alliance [said](#): “Medicare Advantage is Medicare. Those are 30 million seniors who will ultimately see higher premiums and a negative impact on their benefits.”

Elena Rios, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Medical Association [said](#): “There are about 5 million Hispanics that are in Medicare – 53% of those are in MA. More than half. Why? The major reason is that it’s a lower-cost option than Medicare.”

Doug Holz-Eakin, President, American Action Forum [said](#): “... conditions that were recognized as making a senior sicker in 2023 will not be recognized in 2024. The change gets rid of codes like those for pre-diabetes and other early-onset conditions. Budgetarily this is tantamount to saying: ‘We gave you enough to cover these ailing seniors last year, but no longer.’ From a health policy view, it removes the incentive to identify affected seniors early and arrest the deterioration of their health.”

“The administration is proposing Medicare cuts, SOTU histrionics notwithstanding. ... If this were a legislative proposal, it would be characterized as a cut of \$150 billion over 10 years. That is real money.”

Representative Jessica Giannino (D-MA) [tweeted](#):

“Excited to learn that more than 30 million people rely on #MedicareAdvantage, including many in my district. @WhipKClark, together let’s make sure it remains an option.”

Representative Kevin Hern (R-OK) [tweeted](#): “Mr. President, let me remind you: you just cut billions from Medicare Advantage.”

Representative Randy Feenstra (R-IA) [said](#): “According to a notice from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Biden administration has proposed an average 2.3 percent payment cut to Medicare Advantage, which would slash more than \$4.7 billion from this vital program that serves over 30 million American seniors.”

Karyne Jones, President and CEO of the National Caucus of Black Aging [said](#): “Today, roughly half of Black seniors are enrolled in Medicare Advantage, a number that has accelerated in recent years. And these plans are working. Medicare Advantage enrollees were more likely than those in traditional Medicare to report having a usual source of care. They were also more likely to receive preventive care services, such as annual wellness visits and routine checkups, screenings, and vaccines”

Matt Eyles, President and CEO of AHIP [said](#): “With more than 30 million seniors and people with disabilities now enrolled in Medicare Advantage – nearly half of all who are eligible for Medicare – it is a huge endorsement of the value of this program. This milestone shows that people are choosing MA for better affordability and health outcomes. The continued growth of the program is a testament to the tremendous value MA offers to all enrollees, and especially those with chronic illnesses who require care coordination and management, as well as those with low incomes who rely on MA’s access to additional benefits at little or no cost.”

WTAS: Seniors

Kevin Boozel, Butler Eagle said: “Medicare Advantage is a tremendous option for those who live on a fixed income and are stressed about keeping out-of-pocket costs at a minimum.”

Judith Burks, Raleigh, North Carolina said: “As I continue into my senior years, I realize how important it is to center health and wellness in my day-to-day life. I feel so lucky to have amazing benefits and security with my Medicare Advantage plan that help me stay healthy.”

Josephine Glynn, Methuen, Massachusetts said: “One of the largest hassles is a shortage of healthcare professionals, causing a series of issues for patients including longer travel times, out-of-network visits, and higher costs to name a few. For many, these obstacles force older patients to put off care, often leading to declining health. For me, Medicare Advantage has proven to be a viable solution, with a range of benefits that are geared directly toward people in less populated areas. For starters, they offer telehealth services that offers another layer of options to access quality care without having to go into Boston. Additionally, I have access to virtual wellness programs and fitness classes that I otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to attend. Enrolling in Medicare Advantage has positioned me to have the highest level of care, no matter where I live. As I continue to age, I can have confidence that instead of being overlooked, I am prioritized. That means something to me and to my family.”



Freda Lindley, Apache Junction, Arizona said: “January is a time when people resolve to be the healthiest version of themselves. That’s possible for Medicare Advantage seniors, like me, who have access to a full range of wellness services like fitness programs, nutrition planning, mental health resources, and more. If I don’t feel like commuting, I can even participate in virtual fitness classes or receive telehealth services from my own home. My Medicare Advantage plan provides all of this with zero premiums. Best of all, I get peace of mind. Here’s one more wish for 2023: I hope our leaders in Washington protect Medicare Advantage for me and the nearly 600,000 Arizona seniors who depend on it.”