

Grijalva's District Dispatch

Official Newsletter of Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva



MEDICARE & MEDICAID

I'd like to take a moment to talk to you about our health care system. Medicare and Medicaid were created as a commitment to ensure essential medical care would be accessible and affordable to Americans. Despite this, the Trump administration and majority in Congress have introduced proposals to slash the programs. The President's 2019 budget cuts Medicaid and subsidies for private coverage in the marketplace by \$763 billion over the next decade. Seniors should not be required to pay more out of pocket for their medical care so large pharmaceutical companies and private entities can increase their profit margins.

Health care must be a human right, grounded in justice, access, and dignity—not profit. This is why I have cosponsored the Medicare for All Act. Medicare for All means never having to worry about going bankrupt because of a severe illness. It means that a health insurance corporation will never profit by denying you or a loved one necessary care. And by creating a younger, healthier insurance pool, the system will be strengthened, allowing for additional benefits, such as vision, dental and hearing to be covered. In these tumultuous times when privatization of all social service programs is at the forefront of my Republican colleagues' agenda, the need to create a universal, public and accessible plan becomes even more pressing. It also means protecting those programs that are already in place and proven to help the American people.

As you may know, Medicaid is the primary, and often the only, source of healthcare for over 47 million Americans. This program serves low-income children, pregnant women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and parents. In fact, many seniors supplement their Medicare benefits with Medicaid. Over 1/3 of Medicaid enrollees also are also enrolled in Medicare. Considering the importance of Medicaid to so many Americans, this program needs to be strengthened, not destroyed. Unfortunately, earlier this year the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a guidance that would allow states to impose work requirements for all Medicaid beneficiaries. Arizona is one of many looking to adopt these rules. **No person suffering from a chronic illness or disability should have to worry about whether they can afford to seek treatment or face the burden of high medical expenses.** I, along with my colleagues in Congress, have written letters to CMS opposing Medicaid work requirements and expressing our concerns in regards to what those requirements will do to millions of beneficiaries.

As your Congressman, I hope to continue to strengthen social programs like Medicare and Medicaid by supporting legislation that reinforces efforts to improve our healthcare system. I can assure you that I will not support any attempts to privatize, block grant, or otherwise dismantle these vital programs that provide the services and protection that Americans deserve.

If you would like additional information about Medicare or Medicaid or are experiencing issues with either program or any federal agency, please contact my office. Our dedicated staff has years of experience in helping seniors and individuals in our District who need assistance with federal agency-related matters. We offer office hours in Tucson, Avondale and Somerton as well as mobile office hours in Nogales and San Luis, Arizona.

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