

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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Running on Empty

Citizens' Council for Health Freedom Points to New Report Showing Rising Costs and Future Insolvency for Medicare; CCHF Says Seniors Should Be Able to Opt-Out and Keep Social Security Benefits

ST. PAUL, Minn.—The recently released 2019 Medicare Trustees Report shows that Medicare spending will spike by 2038, with total Medicare costs expected to grow from 3.7% of gross domestic product in 2018 to 5.9% in the next 20 years, [Modern Healthcare](#) reported.

Just as alarming, says [Citizens' Council for Health Freedom \(CCHF\)](#), is that the report also projected Medicare's Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund (Medicare Part A) will be insolvent by 2026. (Read the [full report here](#).)

“The 60 million people in Medicare today, and the 10,000 seniors added each day, are in trouble,” said CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase. “Payments for care will be limited to how much comes in from payroll taxes. In 2018, spending under Medicare’s hospitalization program exceeded tax revenue by \$1.6 billion. The fund is running on empty.

“Medicare’s Trustees say Medicare patients may soon have less access to doctors and lower quality of care,” Brase added. “They recommend substantial changes ASAP to allow doctors, hospitals, taxpayers and Medicare patients to ‘adjust expectations and behavior.’”

One simple solution, according to **CCHF**, is to allow seniors to voluntarily opt-out of Medicare Part A and keep or purchase private insurance of their choice or enroll in a health care sharing ministry—without losing their Social Security benefits. **CCHF** and dozens of other respected organizations have [petitioned President Donald Trump](#) on this concept and are pushing for presidential action.

At the Congressional level, on April 4, Sens. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and Mike Lee (R-Utah) reintroduced the Retirement Freedom Act ([S.1030](#)), which would provide seniors with this option for freedom and opportunity. Rep. Gary Palmer (R-Ala.) introduced [companion legislation](#) in the House of Representatives.

CCHF says the current practice of the Social Security Administration unlawfully prohibits an individual from receiving their Social Security benefits unless they enroll in Medicare Part A (hospitalization).

Soon after the Medicare Trustees Report was published, the [White House](#) released a statement on the findings:

“The Medicare Trustees report highlights that the Medicare Hospital Insurance trust fund is expected to be insolvent by 2026, as the program’s finances remain in peril. This report highlights the need for serious-minded legislators to partner with the Administration on commonsense, bipartisan reforms that will lower costs and eliminate fraud and abuse, preserving the program for future generations. The report also underscores the recklessness of proposals to dramatically expand Medicare, which amount to a total government takeover of

healthcare that would eliminate private sector options and actually jeopardize seniors' access to healthcare, while further straining the Federal budget.”

Brase adds that Medicare is failing because it was, in fact, flawed from the beginning.

“When Medicare began in 1966, 19 million Americans were automatically eligible despite never paying a dime,” she recently said in CCHF’s daily “[Health Freedom Minute](#)” radio feature. “Doctors and hospitals who had offered services affordably and charitably suddenly raised their prices. And senior citizens accessed services they may have not paid for on their own. It was a free-for-all.

“Many seniors believe their payroll taxes cover their care, but today it’s their grandchildren’s payroll taxes that pay the bills,” Brase continued. “Today’s seniors receive three times as much in benefits as they paid in taxes. For example, those who retired in the year 2000 will receive [\\$320,000 in Medicare benefits, but they only paid \\$82,000 in payroll taxes](#). Continuing with the Medicare status quo clearly is not working. Something must change.”

Brase’s book, “[Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records](#),” explores how government EHRs negatively impact both patients and doctors and have changed the way medical professionals care for those in their exam rooms. In the book that has recently garnered several honors, Brase also writes extensively about government health care, socialized medicine, patient privacy, health freedom and how the Affordable Care Act has harmed patients and doctors since its 2010 enactment. Find “**Big Brother in the Exam Room**” online wherever books are sold or at [BigBrotherintheExamRoom.com](#).

For more information about CCHF, visit [www.cchffreedom.org](#), its [Facebook](#) page or its Twitter feed @CCHFFreedom. Also view the [media page for CCHF here](#). For more about CCHF’s initiative *The Wedge of Health Freedom*, visit [www.JointheWedge.com](#), *The Wedge* [Facebook](#) page or follow *The Wedge* on Twitter @wedgeoffreedom.

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