

Medicare Works!

**Public opinion polls consistently show most Americans oppose cutting or changing Medicare in order to reduce the Federal Budget Deficit
Here's Why:**



-Medicare is the health insurance program administered by the federal government for people age 65 or older. The program also serves people under age 65 with certain disabilities, and people of all ages with End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant). (Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services – CMMS)

-Today approximately 40 million Americans receive earned Medicare benefits. (Source: CMMS)

-Medicare benefits keep seniors financially independent. “...before Medicare many seniors were forced to turn to children or siblings for help to pay for their medical expenses. Many seniors were forced to rely on the charitable attitude of the doctor or hospital.” (Source, “*The Politics of Medicare*” book by Dr. Ted Marmor)

-Prior to 1965, 44% most older Americans had no health care coverage, and with the medical bills that come with older age, this situation propelled many seniors into poverty. In 1964, the poverty rate for older Americans was double the rate of those under age 65.

-Since Medicare was adopted into law in 1965, virtually all seniors after age 65 now have health care, and the poverty rate for older Americans has fallen from approximately 33% in 1964, to 10% in 2011, a poverty rate that is lower now than that of the general population.

-Medicare is a big consumer bargain according to [a recent study](#) by a Washington DC think tank the Urban Institute: The study compared the amount of a typical worker’s lifetime Medicare payroll taxes with the benefits that worker would likely receive. A single person earning \$44,600 a year (the projected average wage level in 2011) would enjoy a net gain of \$110,000, receiving \$167,000 in lifetime Medicare benefits and paying only \$57,000 in Medicare taxes. (Source: US News & World Report 1/26/11)

Workers and Retirees Take Action Today!

Call your members of Congress at the U.S. Capitol toll free (866)-327-8670.

Tell them to oppose Congressman Paul Ryan’s (Republican-Wisconsin) budget resolution to eliminate and privatize traditional the Medicare system. Protest the U.S. House of Representative vote on April 6, 2011, to end traditional Medicare for workers and retirees, as of 2022.