May 12, 2022

Senator Bernie Sanders
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Budget  
Senator Lindsey Graham  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Budget
624 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders and Ranking Member Graham,

The title of the Senate Budget Committee hearing, “Medicare for All: Protecting Health, Savings Lives, Saving Money,” scheduled for Thursday, May 12, could not be more misleading and inaccurate. Expanding a program that will be insolvent in four years will not save money or lives or protect anyone’s health. On behalf of the more than one million members and supporters of the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, rather than proposing to expand Medicare, I urge the committee to be focused on reforming Medicare.

Medicare Part A assists in paying for inpatient hospital services, hospice care, skilled nursing facilities, and home health services associated with hospital stays. The 2021 Medicare Trustees Report estimated that Part A will be depleted in 2026, the same date as the 2020 report. Congress must address this financial shortfall to minimize the negative impact on taxpayers and patients. Most proposals to “fix” Medicare include spending cuts, tax increases, and increasing the age of eligibility. None of these solutions are patient-centered and put individuals on Medicare at risk.

Government-run healthcare systems like Medicare for All lead to price controls, rationing, and long waiting lists to see a specialist or have surgery. There is a better way than adopting socialized medicine under which government bureaucrats and politicians decide what doctors patients can see and what treatments they can receive. Citizens Against Government Waste’s 2021 report on government-run healthcare describes how this system would harm patients and eliminate consumer choice. Rather than Medicare for All, a free market approach to healthcare reform is essential to allow Americans retain control over their healthcare choices, with numerous options for coverage, and greater opportunities for more innovation. These ideas, among others, are included the Consensus Group’s “Health Care Choices 2020: A Vision for the Future.”

Medicare for All would expand Medicare to include all Americans, putting millions on government assistance and distorting the private insurance market. A Mercatus Center analysis estimated that Medicare for All would increase federal budget commitments by $32.6 trillion during its first 10 years of full implementation (2022–2031), assuming enactment in 2018. After analyzing a single-payer system, the Congressional Budget Office projected that
federal subsidies would cost $1.5 trillion to $3 trillion higher in 2030 than under current law during the same year.

I urge you to reject Medicare for All and work instead to eliminate the waste, fraud, and mismanagement in the current program. Errors, false claims, and overprescribing or overcharging for Medicare services causes more than $60 billion in annual losses. Instead of addressing this mismanagement, supporters of Medicare for All wish to expand this failing government program and steer all Americans toward government health insurance.

Instituting a national one-size-fits-all health care system like Medicare for All will be a detriment to public health and the taxpayers. Congressional spending at current levels is unsustainable and expanding underfunded programs like Medicare is irresponsible and reckless. I strongly urge you not to support Medicare for All or any other government-run healthcare plan.

Sincerely,

Tom Schatz