

Medicare Maladies

A Series that Exposes the Dangerous Elements of the Medicare Bill currently in Committee

MM #10: Hypocrites On The Hill

It's official. There are hypocrites in both the House and Senate.

Key senators are sponsoring legislation that would exempt federal retirees (including retired senators) from the Medicare prescription drug bill they approved earlier this summer. They are joining their colleagues in the House, who passed similar legislation recently.

The policy: Whatever prescription drug benefit Congress produces under Medicare “reform” (it's currently being hammered out in a Capitol Hill committee), it will apply to every senior citizen—except those who worked for the government.

“That tells you a lot about the value of the proposed Medicare drug benefit,” write Heritage Foundation health-care experts Robert Moffit and Derek Hunter in a July 23 essay.

It sure does. But their actions are understandable: Under the congressional proposals, more than one out of every three seniors with drug coverage from their former employers would be dumped from that coverage and put into the new government drug program, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Meanwhile, federal workers have the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, where they can choose from at least a dozen different health plans offering drug coverage. As Moffit and Hunter write: “They clearly want no part of their own Medicare handiwork to affect their own coverage in retirement.”

Read Moffit and Hunter's essay and other Medicare research at heritage.org.

For more information or to receive an e-mail version of “Medicare Maladies,” contact medicaremaladies@heritage.org or call Heritage Media Services at (202) 675-1761.

(“Medicare Maladies” is a regular feature, launched 7/14/03, from The Heritage Foundation. Sad to say, there's another malady coming your way tomorrow. Daily “maladies” are also available on heritage.org.)