

Medicare Maladies

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

MM #79: Medicare Survey Says? BUZZZZZZ!

Voters are having a hard time swallowing Medicare prescription-drug proposals that are making their way through Congress.

Longtime Democratic pollster Mark Mellman says polls show many voters are having second thoughts about the legislation, which would offer prescription drugs to every Medicare patient, regardless of need or income.

“[W]hile voters overwhelmingly support Medicare prescription drug coverage in principle, they are not at all sure about this particular bill,” Mellman writes in the Nov. 5 issue of *The Hill*, which covers Congress. “The hope of something better is being replaced by the fear that the bill will only make things worse.”

That “fear” Mellman speaks of is not without basis. The Congressional Budget Office and Kenneth Thorpe, a former Clinton health-care adviser, have studies that show roughly 4 million retirees would lose their employer-based drug coverage and be dumped into Medicare’s inferior drug plan if the proposals become law.

And that’s just the immediate effect. Over the long-term, the financial burden of future generations is almost beyond belief. The Heritage Foundation, for example, has found that the drug proposals will cost \$2 trillion by 2030 if they become law. Lawmakers have worked through the summer and most of the fall on these proposals, but it’s not too late to make changes.

There’s a better way to offer prescription drugs in Medicare. Find out 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.)