

Durbin, Duckworth, Colleagues Introduce Medicare At 50 Act

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WASHINGTON— U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) in reintroducing the *Medicare at 50 Act*. The bill would give people between the ages of 50 and 64 years old the option of buying into Medicare, while ensuring the program is protected for current Medicare beneficiaries. Millions of Americans approaching retirement or forced to retire early due to layoffs or mandatory retirement face increasing health care needs and rising costs.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of a strong and accessible health care system for all Americans,” said Durbin. “With the *Medicare at 50 Act*, we can give people the choice to participate in Medicare, while safeguarding the program and lowering costs for today’s seniors. I’m proud to cosponsor this legislation to expand quality health care access, an important step forward in our shared goal of health care for all.”

“All Americans deserve high-quality health coverage, and expanding Medicare access to those 50 years old and above would give millions the opportunity to get covered while also protecting and strengthening Medicare for our seniors,” Duckworth said. “I’m proud to join my colleagues in cosponsoring the *Medicare at 50 Act* to help ensure we’re making healthcare more accessible and affordable for all.”

Allowing more Americans to buy into Medicare has the potential to lower their costs, reinforce the existing Medicare program, and strengthen the existing health insurance marketplace. [Polling](#) from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicates that 77 percent of the public supports giving people between the ages of 50 and 64 the option to buy Medicare.

Today, [27% of adults](#) approaching retirement are not confident that they can afford health insurance over the next year, and more than a quarter have issues navigating health insurance options, coverage decisions and out-of-pocket costs. Many did not get the care they needed because of how much it would cost or kept a job or delayed retirement to keep their employer-sponsored health insurance.

U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Tina Smith (D-MN), Jack Reed (D-RI), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Gary Peters (D-MI), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Ed Markey (D-MA) and Bob Casey (D-PA) are also cosponsoring *the Medicare at 50 Act*.