



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Health Care for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: President Bush Proposes Expanded Coverage, Flexibility, and Choice

*President releases plan to save Medicare from insolvency and allow seniors to choose the coverage they need, including prescription drugs.*

WASHINGTON – President Bush today announced a plan to modernize Medicare, the landmark healthcare plan for the retired and disabled. The President’s plan would save Medicare from looming insolvency, guarantee the right of current beneficiaries to keep their current coverage if they so choose, expand coverage to include prescription drugs, and give all seniors a choice of different plans tailored to their individual needs.

Little changed since 1965, Medicare is showing its age. Its one-size-fits-all approach no longer serves the needs of many seniors, its benefit structure does not conform to today’s health care needs such as hospitalization and drug coverage, its bureaucratic management structure cannot contain costs, and the impending retirement of baby boomers threatens to push the system into bankruptcy. President Bush is the first President to propose a comprehensive reform of the system.

**“I commend President Bush for the courage and the foresight to tackle Medicare’s problems with a view to the long term,”** said Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform. **“The President is resisting the pressure of special interests to propose a simple expansion of benefits that will only speed up the bankruptcy of the system, and he is resisting the political expedient of proposing a short-term fix. Instead, he aims to shore up the system for generations to come and to enhance the coverage that seniors currently receive, all in one forward-looking package.”**

Under the President’s plan, seniors could choose between continuing their current coverage under Medicare, or they could “opt in” to a federal employee-style set of plans that offer various levels of coverage suited to individual needs. Seniors could also choose a third option, managed care, which would offer many services at an affordable price. All three options would include prescription drug and preventive care subsidies for lower income seniors.

**“It is rare when a public official offers a reform plan that will serve beneficiaries today and into the future,”** continued Norquist. **“President Bush has once again demonstrated the leadership that has endeared him to the American people.”**

*Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).*