

**CWA Local 4250 RMC
Steve Tisza, President**



PROTECT MEDICARE, STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY

**CWA Convention Resolution: 73A-11-2
Adopted: July 12, 2011**

The House Republican Budget Resolution, approved on a near party-line vote in April 2011, would end Medicare as we know it. Under the House Republican plan, Medicare would be converted from a guaranteed benefit paid by the government into a voucher program in which the federal government would provide seniors with a fixed contribution to purchase medical coverage from private insurers. The change would take place in the year 2022.

There is a major flaw in the plan. Due to the rising cost of health coverage, there would be a growing gap between the amount of the government contribution and the actual cost of health coverage. Seniors would have to pay out-of-pocket to make up the difference simply to maintain the same level of coverage.

Under the House Republican plan, people turning 65 in 2022 (those who are age 54 this year) will have to spend half of their Social Security check on health costs no longer covered by the new Medicare plan. At age 80, the amount of health costs not covered by Medicare will eat up 90 percent of the Social Security benefit.

The Republican Medicare plan will cause a huge shift in costs from the government to seniors. This represents a major transfer of wealth from our most vulnerable citizens to private insurers, which are among the most profitable corporations in the nation.

As if this were not bad enough, the Republicans also propose to change the method of calculating the cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security benefits. Today, Social Security benefit payments are adjusted annually based on the change in the consumer price index (CPI). Under the Republican plan, the COLA would be based on a smaller so-called "chained CPI," adjusting the CPI downward to reflect the fact that people buy less or cheaper goods when prices increase. The effect of this change in the COLA calculation would cut Social Security benefits by a total of \$108 billion over ten years.

Requiring seniors to pay more for Medicare and cutting Social Security benefits is not the way to protect older Americans, nor does it conform to our vision of a humane society.

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Resolved: CWA will stand with seniors to protect Social Security and Medicare and will oppose all attempts to cut these important social insurance programs.

Resolved: CWA will join together with our progressive allies in a campaign to oppose the Republican House plan to cut the federal Medicare program. As part of the campaign, CWA will work through our LPAT structure to get a strong CWA presence at congressional home district town hall meetings during the upcoming August 2011 congressional recess to drive home our united opposition to any plan that would reduce federal Medicare support.