

Obama Administration Record for Seniors

“My Administration is committed to ensuring older Americans can age strong and live long. By strengthening Medicare and Medicaid, while protecting Social Security, we help ensure all Americans can age with dignity...Many of our Nation's older men and women have worked tirelessly and sacrificed so their children could achieve something greater. Their passion and experience inspire us all and we are privileged to honor and care for the generations whose legacy continues to enrich our nation and shape our future.”

-President Barack Obama, April 28, 2010

President Obama knows that to create true middle class security, we can't just cut our way to prosperity. We need to restore security and opportunity for middle class Americans with our fundamental values – making sure everyone does their fair share, everyone gets a fair shake, and hard work and responsibility are rewarded. That's why President Obama has fought to keep America's promises to our seniors by protecting Social Security, strengthening Medicare, and ensuring seniors and their families get the support they need. And the Obama Administration has also worked to protect seniors and taxpayers by cracking down on Medicare fraud. The Obama Administration's record on behalf of seniors includes:

- **Strengthening Medicare and Improving Health Care for Seniors:** President Obama has strengthened Medicare by reducing costs, fighting waste and fraud, and improving benefits and the quality of care for seniors.
 - **Lowering Medicare Costs and Providing Preventive Care:** The Affordable Care Act is projected to save seniors enrolled in traditional Medicare about \$4,200 between 2011 and 2021. Nearly four million seniors who reached the prescription drug “donut hole” in 2010 received a \$250 check to help with the cost of their prescription drugs. In 2011, 3.6 million Medicare beneficiaries saved \$2.1 billion, or about \$604 on average, on prescription drugs in the donut hole based on a 50 percent discount on brand-name drugs and a 14 percent discount on generic drugs in the donut hole. Over time, millions more seniors will benefit from paying a smaller and smaller share of their prescription drug costs until the donut hole closes in 2020. In addition, 32.5 million Medicare beneficiaries have already benefited from the law's free preventive services and new Annual Wellness Visit. The Act has slowed the growth of Medicare premiums and deductibles, and the Part B deductible actually decreased in 2012. Medicare Advantage enrollment has grown by 17% since 2010 while premiums have decreased by 16% over the same period, and overpayments to plans have been reduced. And early retirees have benefitted from lower employer-sponsored insurance premiums due to \$5 billion in financial relief for employers.
 - **Building an Affordable, High-Quality Health System:** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is implementing numerous programs to transform our health care system from one that pays for the quantity of services provided to one that pays for the quality of care provided. This effort includes launching the Innovation Center, which is examining new ways to deliver health care and pay providers that save money while improving the quality of care in Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP.

The Innovation Center has already launched 16 initiatives with 50,000 health care providers in all 50 states, including investing up to \$1 billion in the Partnership for Patients, which will support public-private partnerships to improve the quality, safety, and affordability of health care for all Americans. The Innovation Center is also investing \$1 billion in the Health Care Innovation Challenge to gather the best ideas from the country and put them to action. Medicare is also launching the Medicare Shared Savings Program, which rewards health care providers – including doctor’s offices, hospitals, and others – that work together to treat individual patients while lowering health care costs and meeting performance standards on quality of care and putting patients first.

- **Cracking Down on Health Care Fraud and Abuse:** The Affordable Care Act is one of the toughest anti-fraud laws in history, providing additional tools and resources to keep fraudulent actors out of Medicare and Medicaid, preventing fraudulent payments from being made in the first place, and targeting high-priority areas. For example, the law institutes tougher provider screening and enrollment, and increases penalties for committing fraud. To date, the Administration’s focus on rooting out fraud and abuse is paying off. Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control program activities resulted in a record \$4.1 billion in recoveries in FY 2011. The number of individuals charged for health care fraud has increased by about 75% since 2008, with 1,430 people charged with criminal health care fraud in 2011. Medicare and Medicaid have also implemented common-sense anti-fraud policies, like barring providers who have been kicked out of one program for fraud from the other, and tracking fraud suspects across State lines so that Medicaid programs don’t fall victim to the same scams.
- **Supporting Individuals and Families Affected by Alzheimer’s Disease:** On January 4, 2011, the President signed into law the National Alzheimer’s Project Act. This law calls for the development and implementation of a national plan to respond to Alzheimer’s disease. The Administration’s Federal Advisory Council will produce a blueprint for research, treatment, long-term services, family support, and other priorities. On February 7, 2012, the Obama Administration announced new steps to fight Alzheimer’s disease, including immediately making an additional \$50 million available for cutting-edge Alzheimer’s disease research in Fiscal Year 2012. In addition, the Administration announced that its 2013 Budget boosts funding for Alzheimer’s disease research by \$80 million. The announcement also included an additional \$26 million investment in caregiver support, provider education, public awareness and improvements in data collection.
- **Strengthening Retirement Security:** President Obama has worked to strengthen retirement security so that workers can have peace of mind knowing that the Social Security benefits and retirement income that they have earned will be there for them when they need it.
- **Protecting Social Security:** President Obama is committed to protecting and strengthening Social Security. That’s why he pushed Congress to find a bipartisan compromise ensuring America meet its financial obligations – including Social

Security checks to seniors – and has called on Congress to work on a bipartisan basis to strengthen Social Security. He also stands firmly opposed to privatization, which would add to the deficit while tying benefits to the whims of Wall Street traders and the ups and downs of the stock market. The Recovery Act provided a one-time payment of \$250 to retirees, other Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. Fifty-six million retirees and other individuals received this one-time payment, totaling \$14 billion, to help with expenses in the midst of the economic crisis.

- **Protecting Workers and Retirees from Hidden Fees and Biased Investment Advice Regarding Their 401(k) Plans:** The Department of Labor has issued rules to increase protections for Americans' retirement savings. Investment companies will have to provide a standard disclosure of the fees they are charging to 401(k) plans. The Administration is also updating guidelines to make unbiased investment advice in retirement accounts available to workers and retirees.
- **Preventing Elder Abuse:** Millions of older Americans are abused, neglected, or exploited each year – often by someone they know – and an estimated 84% of these incidents are not reported. One way this Administration is committed to fighting elder abuse is through the Elder Justice Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in 2010. The Elder Justice Act provides the first-ever authorization of Federal resources for adult protective services demonstrations to test the best methods of identifying, responding to, and preventing elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The President's 2013 Budget proposes \$8 million in first-time funding for this purpose.
- **Financing Supportive Housing Options for Seniors:** The President signed into law the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Act of 2010. The new law makes a number of changes to simplify and streamline the development and preservation of affordable housing that facilitates access to the supportive services elderly residents need to live independently in the community. The law updates the Section 202 program to make it easier to develop new service enriched housing and to retrofit existing elderly assisted housing to support the needs of elderly residents as they age in place.
- **Promoting Volunteerism to Support Seniors:** The President and members of his Administration believe that older Americans are a national resource that can be mobilized to serve in communities across our Nation. In 2009, President Obama signed into law the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the most sweeping expansion of national service in decades. It also reduced the minimum age of Senior Corps participants from 60 to 55, providing new opportunities for older Americans to serve.