



WEEKLY UPDATE

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Checking in with GOP 2016ers on the 50th Anniversary to Medicare and Medicaid

For the past 50 years, Medicare and Medicaid have lifted countless Americans out of poverty and given millions of seniors and families the peace of mind that comes with affordable health coverage. The Affordable Care Act built on this legacy by strengthening the Medicare trust fund, keeping it solvent until 2030.

If we want Medicare and Medicaid to be around for another 50 years, we need to protect these programs from GOP presidential candidates who want to destroy them. Here's where they stand:

- **Jeb Bush** said he wanted to "[phase out](#)" the Medicare program.
- **Chris Christie** [supported the Ryan Budget](#) which would turn Medicare into a voucher system, a move that would have [cost seniors](#) an average of \$6,000 in extra out-of-pocket costs every year.
- **Marco Rubio** [endorsed](#) a voucher system, [called for](#) raising the retirement age, and said that earned benefit programs that provide Americans with financial security have "[weakened us as a people](#)."
- **Ted Cruz** [supports](#) the Ryan plan that would turn Medicare into a voucher system.
- **Scott Walker** refused to expand Medicaid, a decision that could [cost](#) his state \$400 million and result in [84,700 fewer](#) Wisconsinites being covered.
- **Rand Paul** [proposed](#) raising the retirement age for Medicare coverage and means-testing the program.
- **Rick Perry** said that the Ryan plan for Medicare was "a good idea."

"Medicare and Medicaid have been an overwhelming success for 50 years. But if Democrats and seniors don't remain vigilant against Republican candidates who want to gut Medicare and Medicaid, this may be the penultimate celebration for both of these critical programs. Instead of threatening to dismantle and voucherize successful programs that have helped millions of Americans gain health care and achieve financial security, Republicans should work with Democrats to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid so that anyone who wants health insurance will be able to afford it." – Eric Walker, DNC Spokesperson

Please also find a statement from DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz on the 50th Anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid:

"Today is the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of Medicare and Medicaid. For half a century, these programs have existed as a sacred promise between America and its people: that if you work hard and play by the rules, they will be there for you when you need it. Prior to their creations, too many seniors had no reliable health care and medical costs bankrupted too many hard-working families.

"In recent years, the Affordable Care Act has helped us to better fulfill the goals of Medicare and Medicaid. The cost-saving measures introduced have extended the life of the Medicare trust fund. More than sixteen million Americans have gained access to quality, affordable health care, and it would be millions more if more Republican governors would finally accept the law's Medicaid expansion.

"Despite the undeniable success of Medicare and Medicaid, their continued existence is in jeopardy. Just recently, Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush expressed his desire to "phase out" the Medicare program. Marco Rubio's so-called "New American Century" would undo the progress of the last, by turning Medicare into a voucher system. And Republicans running for President in 2016 have endorsed a plan to end Medicare as we know it.

"Medicare and Medicaid are promises that America must keep. Democrats are committed to fulfilling these promises, and strengthening them for generations to come."

Raise Your Hand if You've Ever Been Personally Victimized by Chris Christie

If you're an old high school buddy of Chris Christie's, you're going to get a seat at the (lunch) table. From David Wildstein, the architect of the Bridgeway scandal, to numerous judges in the state, Christie has given friends from his alma mater favors that go beyond a ride to the mall. Looking at his record in New Jersey, one thing is clear as plastic—Chris Christie is used to being the Queen Bee.

Regina George and Chris Christie have that in common. Under Chris Christie, New Jersey had experienced a record-breaking nine credit downgrades, the state still hasn't regained the jobs it lost after the Great Recession, and was ranked 48th in the country when it comes to private sector job growth.

If New Jersey voters seem confused whenever Christie shows up for an event, that's because he's been out of state over half the year so far—he has completely abandoned New Jersey. He barely even goes there, and not even a cake full of rainbows will make New Jersey voters forget that.

Oh, Chris. He actually thinks voters don't want him to run for president because they want him to stay in New Jersey. And unlike delusional high schoolers, Christie has polling data that proves him wrong.

Hey, not everyone gets straight A's in science. Christie enacted climate change denial policies, like withdrawing the state from a regional pact to reduce greenhouse gases and raiding more than \$1 billion in clean energy funds.

Chris Christie vetoed women's health funding six times, just to pander to the extreme Republican base. That's not cool for women.

The people of New Jersey just keep finding themselves in the crosshairs of Christie's bad decisions. He told them he would make the ARC tunnel happen, but then... he stopped trying to make that tunnel happen. Meanwhile commuters are stuck in nightmarish transportation delays. Not fetch.

No one plays politics with who gets a seat at the table like Chris Christie. He uses his veto pen to play politics, breaks his promises to the people of New Jersey, hurls insults at elected officials, and even strong-arms members of his own party. And let's not forget that members of his inner circle caused an epic and dangerous traffic jam on the busiest bridge in the world to punish a Democratic mayor for his refusal to endorse Christie's reelection bid.

So New Jersey: Raise your hand if you've ever been personally victimized by Chris Christie.

That's what we thought.

Scott Walker Can't Take a Position on Cheesesteak... or anything else.

On Tuesday, Scott Walker ate a cheesesteak at Pat's King of Steaks in Philadelphia. Then, minutes later, Walker ate a cheesesteak at Geno's Steaks in Philadelphia. Anyone from South Philly (or well, google) can tell you that Pat's vs. Geno's is the city's (the world's?) greatest rivalry. Why does Walker refuse to pick a side?

Here are other things Scott Walker can't commit to:

- [Whether evolution is real.](#)
- [Whether President Obama is a Christian.](#)
- [Whether President Obama loves America.](#)
- [Whether Huckabee's Holocaust comment on Iran was inappropriate.](#)

So, will it be Geno's or Pat's? Geno's then Pat's? Pat's then Geno's? Will Scott Walker be able to make a decision? And will he stick with it?

"Scott Walker has not been able to take positions on evolution, President Obama's love of country, and lacks the leadership to pick a side when one of his fellow GOP candidates steps way over the line. And now he can't even pick a cheesesteak? This pattern of pandering is un-presidential." – TJ Helmstetter, DNC spokesperson

Jeb Bush's Policies will Devastate Hispanic Communities

Monday in Orlando, Jeb Bush said he was a part of the Hispanic community. But his record and policies that impact the Hispanic community are just wrong – and he's not going to fool anyone.

- Jeb Bush said citizenship for undocumented immigrants was an "[undeserving reward](#)."
- Jeb Bush [compared](#) the deferred action program that protects DREAMers from deportation to the actions of a Latin American dictator.
- Jeb Bush defended Arizona's controversial immigration law.
- As Governor, Jeb Bush slashed taxes by billions, which [largely benefited the wealthy](#) and corporations over the middle class and hardworking Hispanic families.
- Jeb Bush has opposed education programs that are vital to preserving the American dream: he has long attacked [classroom size reductions](#), and he [supported](#) a budget that would gut education funding – from early education to Pell Grants for college students.
- Jeb Bush: "[We must repeal Obamacare](#)."
- Jeb Bush [opposes raising the minimum wage](#) and said "we need to leave it to the private sector...this is one of those poll-driven deals."

"Bush's failed policies will devastate Hispanic communities. Bush's failed policies of the past are no different than every other Republican in the field – he wants to divide families, hurt our economy, and let those like Jeb Bush, and only Jeb Bush, get ahead."— Pablo Manriquez, DNC Director of Hispanic media

"Las fracasadas políticas de Bush devastarían a las comunidades hispanas. Las políticas fallidas del pasado de Bush no son diferentes a cualquier otro republicano en el campo – él quiere dividir familias, dañar a nuestra economía, y dejar que aquellos como Jeb Bush, y sólo Jeb Bush, salgan adelante." – Pablo Manriquez, director de medios hispanos del DNC

In the States

- On Saturday, in response to Rand Paul's disrespectful treatment of voters during his recent visit to New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Democratic Party released the following statement: "Rand Paul doesn't want to explain his positions to Granite Staters because he can't – shifting the tax burden to the middle class, repealing the Affordable Care Act, taking away rights of women to make their own healthcare choices, and taking away the right to marry. Granite Staters take their responsibility as First in the Nation Primary voters seriously and want to talk about real issues that help the middle class get ahead, not be dismissed by being told to sit down." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Monday, South Carolina Democratic Chair Jaime Harrison issued a statement challenging Marco Rubio and Rand Paul's claims that they are "new" Republicans when their policies are outdated and stuck in the past: "As South Carolinians work more hours for less wages, Republicans need to take seriously the difficulties that too many families face in paying for healthcare, education, and childcare. While Republican candidates cling to policies of the past, Democrats will continue working to improve the lives of working families left behind by a Republican Party that puts the interests of the wealthy ahead of the middle class." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Monday, after Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick walked back criticisms of Donald Trump's "vile rhetoric" against Latinos, the Texas Democratic Party released a statement comparing Trump's views to those of Dan Patrick and his "racist, xenophobic Republican base": Who said the following, Dan or Donald? Q1) "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." Q2) "They are bringing Third World diseases with them." Q3) "The number one problem we are facing is the silent invasion of the border. We are being overrun. It is imperiling our safety." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Tuesday, the Iowa Democratic Party responded to Scott Walker's claim that "You can tell a lot about a person by the company they keep" by highlighting the "misplaced, special interest alliances" that have hurt Wisconsin and stand to do the same to the rest of the country: "The problem for Iowans and the rest of the country is that the company Scott Walker keeps has convinced him to slash school funding for Wisconsin students, oppose renewable energy initiatives, eliminate basic employee rights for his state's workers, and move Wisconsin right to the bottom in job growth. This is the same man who once took a phone call from a David Koch impersonator to thank him for his support and who earned the title of "King of Kochworld." And even a cursory glance at his record demonstrates that Walker's career has been defined by rewarding the allies who bankroll his anti-middle class policies." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Wednesday, former Virginia governor Jim Gilmore filed to run for president and the Democratic Party of Virginia was quick to launch So You Googled Jim Gilmore, "a microsite aimed at educating voters on a man who will probably never be president": The microsite features classic Gilmore hits, like: No Car Tax failure, Resigning in disgrace from the RNC, Ending his term with a \$1.3 billion funding shortfall, Losing handily to Mark Warner in 2008. "So many Americans have never heard of Jim Gilmore, so we knew had to do something for them," said Morgan Finkelstein, press secretary for the Democratic Party of Virginia. "Just because he doesn't have a chance at winning doesn't mean he doesn't have a terrible record to run on." Read the full press release [here](#).