



March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Donovan and Members, House Health and Human Services Committee

Rc: Support for House Resolution No. 7430

SACRI supports House Resolution No. 7430, Respectfully Urging the US Congress to Protect Patients and Traditional Medicare from Medicare Advantage. SACRI's mission is to mobilize people to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. It accomplishes this through *community organizing, public education, advocacy, and legislative action*. When we consider quality of life, older adults consistently tell us that access to and affordability of healthcare is a top priority.

**Why does SACRI support House Resolution No. 7430?**

Data from KFF show that 60% of RIers on Medicare are in Medicare Advantage Plans. Medicare Advantage Plans are private plan alternatives to what is called Traditional Medicare. According to a KFF issue brief, an initial goal of having Medicare contract with private health plans was to generate savings and promote competition. However, savings have never been realized and a Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) report estimates that, in 2025, payments from the federal government to Medicare Advantage plans exceed what spending would have been in traditional Medicare by 20%, which translates into \$84 billion in additional spending.

“Higher payments to Medicare Advantage plans increase total Medicare spending, strain the Part A Hospital Insurance trust fund and drive-up Part B premiums for all Medicare beneficiaries. “ (@<https://www.kff.org/medicare/how-medicare-pays-medicare-advantage-plans-issues-and-policy-options/>)

These differences in payments are almost entirely based on coding intensity and favorable selection. How Medicare Advantage plans get paid is complex involving a variety of factors. Most Medicare Advantage Plans offer benefits not provided in Traditional Medicare (ex. vision and dental care) which are often paid for through rebates. There have been proposals put forward to change the payment system some of which would require Congressional action.

As the MedPac report shows spending by Medicare Advantage Plans in 2025 was 20% higher than traditional Medicare – money that could be used to address gaps in traditional Medicare such as dental and vision care and hearing aid coverage, SACRI supports asking our RI Congressional delegation to ask the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary and Centers for Medicare and the Medicaid Services Administrator to take immediate administrative actions that would include promoting greater financial transparency, conducting more audits to identify fraud and redirecting funds that currently go towards enriching MA plans to instead go towards protecting and expanding traditional Medicare.

Thank you for your consideration of SACRI's support for this Resolution.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director