

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins U.S. Sens. Stabenow and Brown to introduce legislation to expand Medicare and reduce health care costs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) today introduced the *Medicare at 50 Act* to give people between the ages of 50 and 64 years old the option of buying into Medicare. Millions of Americans who are approaching retirement or are being [forced to retire](#) early due to layoffs or mandatory retirement face increasing health care needs and rising costs.

“Wisconsinites have sent a clear message to Washington that they want us to work together to expand access to health care and lower costs,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “Our legislation will give millions of older Americans another choice for more affordable, quality health insurance coverage. For people between the ages of 50 and 64, this is a high quality option that can help reduce health care costs and increase competition in the marketplace.”

“Our legislation is a win-win for American families,” **said Senator Stabenow.** “It will help strengthen Medicare and lower costs and improve care for millions of people.”

“I support Universal coverage and I believe one of the best ways to get there is by opening Medicare up for people in their 50s to voluntarily buy in. This will help millions of people, strengthen the Affordable Care Act and get us closer to our goal

of making sure everyone has healthcare coverage,” **said Senator Brown.**

Allowing more Americans to buy into Medicare has the potential to lower their costs, reinforce the existing Medicare program, and strengthen the existing health insurance marketplace. Recent [polling from the Kaiser Family Foundation](#) indicates that 77 percent of people strongly support giving people between the ages of 50 and 64 the option to buy Medicare.

Today, 27 percent of adults approaching retirement [are not confident](#) that they can afford health insurance over the next year, and more than a quarter have issues navigating health insurance options, coverage decisions, and out-of-pocket costs. Many did not get the care they needed because of how much it would cost or kept a job or delayed retirement to keep their employer-sponsored health insurance.

U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Gary Peters (D-MI), Jack Reed (D-RI), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Tina Smith (D-MN) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) also cosponsored the *Medicare at 50 Act*. Congressmen Brian Higgins (NY-26), John Larson (CT-01), Joe Courtney (CT-02), and Peter Welch (VT-AL) introduced companion legislation in the House.