

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Demands OPM take action to end wasteful spending, fix federal employees health benefits program

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WASHINGTON – On Friday, U.S. Sens. Ron Johnson and Rick Scott issued the following statements after the release of a study conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) at their [request](#). The GAO Study reveals that the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) mismanagement of the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program allowed ineligible individuals to obtain employer sponsored health coverage. As the largest employer-sponsored health insurance program in the country, the FEHB Program covers more than eight million federal employees, retirees and family members at annual cost of more than \$59 billion.

According to GAO, OPM cannot identify or estimate how many ineligible individuals are enrolled in FEHB and has no plans to establish a monitoring mechanism to identify and remove these ineligible enrollees. OPM estimates that these continued improper payments could be costing the FEHB program approximately [\\$1 billion](#) in American taxpayer dollars every year. Although aware of this issue, President Biden's OPM has failed to fix it or commit to take corrective action and continues to assess that the FEHB is a "low risk" of fraud. GAO noted that OPM "cannot support its determination that the [FEHB] program is at a low risk of fraud" because OPM has not even tried to comprehend the scale and scope of potential fraud in the program

"OPM's grotesque mismanagement of the FEHB program is yet another example of the vast dysfunction in our federal agencies. Biden's OPM has miserably failed to fix this issue, wasting \$1 billion taxpayer dollars per year. Unless OPM takes immediate

corrective action, even more taxpayer dollars will be carelessly wasted. This Administration's negligence has resulted in soaring inflation and massive deficit spending. The federal government should answer to the American people instead of mortgaging our children's future," **said Sen. Johnson**

"I am appalled that OPM is wasting \$1 BILLION of taxpayer dollars every year by failing to properly monitor the FEHB program and has no plan to fix it. Federal funds do not belong to Congress or the Executive Branch, they belong to the American people. While too many in Washington seem to forget that it is hardworking taxpayers fund these programs, I won't. We cannot allow the Biden administration to continue the wasteful spending that's led to raging inflation and \$31 TRILLION in debt. OPM, and every government entity should have zero tolerance for any waste or misuse of tax dollars and should immediately adopt GAO's recommendations to end this wasteful spending. When I was Governor, I ordered a Dependent Eligibility Verification Audit of Florida's group health insurance program that resulted in over \$20 million saved. I know we can do the same at the federal level," **said Sen. Scott.**

GAO made 4 [recommendations](#) to OPM:

1. OPM should monitor agencies and insurance plans to ensure they are verifying family member eligibilities as required by OPM's 2021 guidance.
2. OPM needs a monitoring mechanism to identify and remove ineligible family members from FEHB.
3. OPM should assess the likelihood and impact of fraud risk due to ineligible FEHB members.
4. OPM should document its assessment of fraud risk for FEHB.