

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

April 28, 2022

Chairman Richard Neal
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building

Dear Chairman Neal,

Thank you for convening this hearing with Secretary Becerra on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) FY 2023 budget request.

The Biden budget doubles down on Democrats' economic sabotage, worsens Americans' health care, and bungles the major crises American families are facing.

We urge you to reject this budget and instead work with Republicans on policies to restore our nation's economic growth.

Last year, Democrats rammed through their \$2 trillion reckless "emergency" spending bill and now we are seeing its impact on families. Paying people more not to work has kept workers on the sidelines, creating a national worker shortage and further driving up costs for businesses and consumers.

Yet, the Administration's budget doubles down on the same inflation-fueling, partisan socialist agenda in the Democrats' "Crush American Families Plan." Democrats' plan will undermine, not help, American families with policies that drive up the underlying cost of health care, disincentivize work with higher government subsidies to those on unemployment, and put Washington, not parents, in control of child care and children's education.

Like last year, this budget includes no plan to save Medicare from going broke, while further undermining its promise to seniors. The portion of dedicated spending for hospital-based services will be exhausted by 2026. Without changes, working Americans could face a hike in the Medicare payroll tax by 26 percent or seniors could see their benefits cut by 16 percent to make the program solvent. This is the closest we've come to insolvency since the 1990s and yet the President's budget provides no solutions.

The budget supports policies that will empower bureaucrats to block timely access to breakthrough cures and treatments. The Biden Administration has cancelled Trump-era initiatives to bring breakthrough technologies to patients more quickly and have chilled development of an entire new class of Alzheimer's drugs. Together this represents a continued bias toward bureaucratic control and price setting for health care.

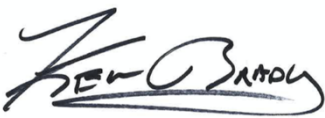
The budget includes no long-term plan for telehealth reforms for the 1.7 million Americans per week on average who used telehealth during the pandemic. American families deserve to keep greater access and choice in health care. Yet, President Biden will not guarantee a continuation of these critical benefits for Medicare patients beyond a short-term extension.

The Biden Administration continues to bungle the major crises American families are facing today. Democrats have continually failed to lead with:

- No plan to address the humanitarian chaos at the border
- Inaction that has led to more fentanyl in our communities, making it the number one killer for Americans aged 18-45 – why is the Administration more focused on limiting Alzheimer's treatments than stopping illegal fentanyl?
- A botched rollout and continued litigation surrounding the landmark, bipartisan law to protect patients from surprise medical bills, including a provision to give patients unprecedented and revolutionary access to health care prices.

Ways and Means Republicans will raise these concerns and more today during our hearing with Secretary Becerra, and we hope you will allow this Committee instead to focus on policies that advance economic prosperity rather than a partisan budget proposal that will hold back our recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "KEVIN BRADY". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "K" and "B".

KEVIN BRADY
Republican Leader
Committee on Ways and Means