



*Adopted September 6, 2002
Amended May 12, 2006
Last Edited July 27, 2022*

Resolution

Strengthening Traditional Medicare

Whereas Medicare is the nation's largest and most successful health insurance system serving the health needs of almost 63 million senior and disabled beneficiaries; and

Whereas prior to the Medicare Act being signed into law on July 30, 1965, only half of our nation's seniors had health insurance, and when they became afflicted with a health issue were forced to either risk financial ruin by seeking care or avoid treatment while their health deteriorated; and

Whereas Medicare has been the most financially efficient health care system in the United States with administrative costs that average only 2% of program outlays; and

Whereas Medicare delivers a guaranteed level of coverage to people who might not otherwise be able to afford it, and

Whereas the traditional Medicare program does not cover essential health care services including annual physical exams, dental health, eyeglasses, hearing aids and foot care; and

Whereas although Medicare Advantage plans offered by private companies promise beneficiaries lower premiums or more benefits, too many seniors in these plans face delays or the outright denial of necessary health care which Medicare requires MA plans to cover; and

Whereas Medicare Advantage promised to deliver care to beneficiaries at a lower cost, but in 2019 charged \$321 more per person than traditional Medicare, costing taxpayers another \$7 billion in that year;

Whereas a investigation conducted by the HHS Inspector General found that tens of thousands of enrollees in Medicare Advantage plans have been denied care that should be covered; and

Whereas former President Trump's administration created a model pilot Accountable Care Organization or "ACO" program known as Geographic Direct Contracting to coordinate primary care; and

Whereas critics and health care advocates argued that this model lacked transparency, increased costs to the Medicare system, made it more difficult for patients to access health care services, and was a step towards the privatization of traditional fee for service Medicare; and

Whereas the Biden administration correctly canceled the Trump administration's Geographic Direct Contracting model and replaced it with ACO REACH, a demonstration program that will launch in 2023 that differs greatly from the previous pilot program because it increases provider governance and transparency and focuses on greater health equity; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports a strengthened traditional Medicare program with greatly expanded benefits including annual physical exams, dental health, eyeglasses, hearing aids and foot care; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans calls on the Department of Health and Human Services to increase its oversight and enforcement activities regarding Medicare Advantage plans so that beneficiaries receive their guaranteed benefits without delay; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans will continue to educate and mobilize its members, the American public and public officials on the merits and successes of the traditional Medicare program.