

MADISON - For the past 50 years, Medicare and Medicaid have lifted countless Americans out of poverty and given millions of seniors and families the peace of mind that comes with affordable health coverage. The Affordable Care Act built on this legacy by strengthening the Medicare trust fund, keeping it solvent until 2030.

If we want Medicare and Medicaid to be around for another 50 years, we need to protect these programs from GOP presidential candidates who want to destroy them. Here's where they stand:

- **Jeb Bush** said he wanted to " phase out " the Medicare program.
- **Chris Christie** supported the Ryan Budget which would turn Medicare into a voucher system, a move that would have cost seniors an average of $6,000 in extra out-of-pocket costs every year.

- **Marco Rubio** endorsed a voucher system, called for raising the retirement age, and said that earned benefit programs that provide Americans with financial security have " weakened us as a people ."

- **Ted Cruz** supports the Ryan plan that would turn Medicare into a voucher system.
- **Scott Walker** refused to expand Medicaid, a decision that could cost his state $400 million and result in 84,700 fewer Wisconsinites being covered.

- **Rand Paul** proposed raising the retirement age for Medicare coverage and means-testing the program.
- **Rick Perry** said that the Ryan plan for Medicare was "a good idea."

"Medicare and Medicaid help thousands of Wisconsinites afford the healthcare they need to stay healthy. That is why it's so critical that we protect and preserve these programs, not just for our current seniors and families but for future generations as well. It's shameful that Republicans like Scott Walker and Paul Ryan want to end the promise of Medicare and use healthcare for our seniors and families as a political bargaining chip." – Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Martha Laning said Thursday.