



Media Contact: Lynnette Acosta
Director of Public Relations
Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida
E-mail: media@fldemhc.org
www.fldemhc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It Is Time to Preserve and Protect Medicare and Medicaid!

Orlando, Florida (July 30, 2015) – Fifty years ago today, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Medicare into law. Since, 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. This includes over 15 million Hispanics currently enrolled in Medicaid and over 3.5 million in Medicare*.

Still, there are some in Congress who continue to call for benefit cuts for retirees and disabled Americans. The House Republican budget guts Medicaid and turns Medicare into a voucher program, under which seniors would receive a limited stipend to purchase insurance in the private marketplace or remain on Medicare. The Medicare cuts would do nothing to reduce the cost of health care, but instead, shift costs on to beneficiaries.

On the campaign trail, Republican Presidential candidates have openly expressed their intentions of destroying these programs as we know them. Earlier this week Jeb Bush told a crowd in New Hampshire we need to “phase out” Medicare for future enrollees.

There is a better alternative -- one that will not harm beneficiaries. **The Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida urges Congress to pass the Medicare Drug Savings Act introduced by Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL), S. 1083 and H.R. 2005.** This legislation will require drug companies to provide the government discounts for low-income Medicare beneficiaries, saving the government and taxpayers \$121 billion over 10 years and all but eliminating the need to cut benefits or shift costs on to beneficiaries.

Today on this Anniversary, Latinos in Florida are here to stand up to politicians in Tallahassee and Washington who are determined to rise the retirement age. We are telling politicians in

Tallahassee and Washington that we don't want our Medicare turned over to big insurance companies. We are here to demand that Congress preserve and protect Medicare and Medicaid for future generations.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, data as of 2013.

####

The **Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida**'s mission is to stimulate a participating interest in public affairs that will foster better and more representative government for Hispanics; increase the political power and influence of Hispanics Democrats within the Florida Democratic Party; unite the Hispanic Democrats in the State of Florida; promote principles of the Democratic party at all levels; encourage qualified Hispanic citizens to become candidates for public office and support applicable campaign efforts to elect all Democratic party nominees; support and solicit for legislation and government action on a national, state, county and local level which reflects the best interest of the Hispanic community.