

Could Trump's GOP Budget Cuts Kill Medicaid? Breaking Down the \$2.3 Trillion Threat

Featuring Alex Lawson
Executive Director,
Social Security Works



This time on Code WACK!

What's at stake for Medicaid—the *lifeline for millions of low-income Americans*—under President Donald Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress determined to slash spending? **How would cutting Medicaid affect the more than 72 million people who rely on it for health care? And is Social Security next on the chopping block?**

To break it down, we spoke with **Alex Lawson**, executive director of [Social Security Works](#), an organization fighting to protect and expand Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid; lower drug prices; and ensure health care as a human right. *This is part one of a two-part series.*

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WE DISCUSS

President Donald Trump has issued some absolutely startling health-related executive orders recently. Which do you think we should be most concerned about, and why?

"I actually think that it's putting Elon Musk in charge of treasury, giving him and his gang of arsonists access and control over, you know, the wallet of the United States of America.

"...You got to remember that just a week ago, the president tried to unilaterally ... turn off Medicaid, and then there was a huge backlash because when you take health care away from tens of millions of people....

"What I'm saying is that [it's] the erosion, the destruction of guardrails of checks and balances in our government that the Trump administration is in the midst of, and we're in like, what week three?" – **Alex Lawson**

Right, it's been less than a month since Trump took office.

"But we just gotta remember they've had four years waiting in the wings planning this blitzkrieg assault on every aspect of our democratic system. And that includes healthcare.

"So they can't wait to get their greedy little hands to privatize Medicare. RFK Junior, he's probably gonna be confirmed. Now he's made a clear overt goal to privatize Medicare.

"You know, they all pretend when the cameras are rolling for campaign season that they're not gonna touch Social Security, but you just have to scratch the surface. ... since the eighties, it's been an overt goal of the

Republican Party. And they have proposals, so you don't have to guess what they're gonna do.

"They write it down. They're gonna raise the retirement age to 69 or 70, which is between a 14 and a 21% benefit cut alongside other benefit cuts. They're going to steal people's benefits that they've earned with Medicaid. You know, they just wrote it down again, \$2.3 trillion cut out of Medicaid. That is a destruction of Medicaid." - **Alex Lawson**

What's the ultimate goal of all this, Alex?

"The tax cuts that passed during Trump's first term will cease to exist if they're not redone this year. **And so the whole push is to pass this tax handout using budget reconciliation and ... Medicaid cuts to pay for it.**

"So ... we're still in the beginning stages of this Blitzkrieg executive order part-of-the-show, because Donald Trump can do all this stuff with the power of the presidency alone ... 'cause on the hill legislatively ... you need the House and the Senate to act.

"The House right now has a zero person majority. In March they'll get a three person majority back. So three house members have entered the [Trump] administration, and they only had a three person majority, so [their majority] went down to zero. So right now, the House can't actually pass something ...

"That's why we have the menu of options, which includes the \$2.3 trillion in Medicaid cuts, among other things, hundreds of millions in Medicare, and ..., you know, the destruction of [SNAP](#), which is food assistance." - **Alex Lawson**

Helpful Links

Who does Medicaid serve?

[Medicaid Eligibility Policy](#), *Medicaid.gov*

[New Congressional Attempt to Cut Medicaid Through Budget Reconciliation](#), *Medicare Rights Center*

[Policy Basics: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#), *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*

[To Pay for Trump Tax Cuts, House GOP Floats Plan to Slash Benefits for the Poor and Working Class](#), *Propublica*

[How the Trump Administration Could Leave Families Hungry: Potential Cuts to SNAP in 2025 and Beyond](#), *Center for American Progress*

[Republicans May Find It Harder to Cut Medicaid Than They Think](#), *Politico*

Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#)

Guest Biography - Alex Lawson

Alex Lawson is the Executive Director of [Social Security Works](#), the convening member of the [Strengthen Social Security Coalition](#)— a coalition made up of over 340 national and state organizations representing over 50 million Americans.

Mr. Lawson has appeared on numerous TV and radio outlets and is a frequent guest covering Social Security and Medicare issues on The Thom Hartmann Program, one of the top progressive radio shows in the country. He has a BA from St. John's College and an MPP from The George Washington University. He is on Twitter [@alaw202](#).

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