Dear Friend,

When Medicare was created in 1965, it marked a major and important change for seniors in our nation. Before the law's enactment, more than half of all seniors had little or no access to health care because they could not afford it.

Medicare changed all that by providing guaranteed, affordable health care to the disabled and all Americans 65-years-of-age and older. Today, every senior has access to health care coverage because of Medicare.

Medicare is one of America's greatest success stories, but today it is under attack and faces a very real threat to its existence.

In April, the Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives passed a radical plan—the "Ryan Plan"—to eliminate Medicare as we know it and replace it with a privatized system that would provide future seniors with a voucher to pay part of their cost to purchase private insurance in the open market.

The sponsors of the plan to dismantle Medicare admit that the voucher won't be enough to cover the costs of insurance and other medical care for most seniors. Under their plan, the remainder of the cost of purchasing private health insurance (assuming it is available at all) and other health care costs would come out of seniors' pockets.

As the Congress rightly focuses on reducing the federal deficit, there are many proposals to restore long-term fiscal responsibility to our budgeting. But destroying the Medicare program for our seniors and future generations is not a viable solution that I can support.

I will continue to fight this plan and stand with Northern Virginia's seniors to keep the promise that has provided health care, stability, and dignity to generations of American seniors over the last 45 years.

Sincerely,

Gerry Connolly

"After a lifetime of paying Medicare taxes, seniors deserve access to health care in the years they need it most." — Gerry Connolly