

Senate Republicans Take Up Medicaid Fraud Message Before Recess

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Senate Republicans took up the message that their House colleagues have been hammering for months: Medicaid is rife with fraud and the program's spending is skyrocketing.

Just days before leaving for August recess, the Senate Budget Committee held a hearing with conservative think tanks to discuss ways to reduce waste and fraud in the program. House **Republicans have touted the message** as federal spending in Medicaid is set to decrease due to changes from the 2025 GOP tax law. This was the first budget hearing since the former chair, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), died suddenly last month.

"We'd like to at least eliminate the fraud in the program," said Sen. **Ron Johnson** (R-Wis.), who took over as chair. "Make sure the dollars we spend are going to the people who truly need it."

Johnson said his interest in holding the hearing was prompted by the **Congressional Budget Office June report** showing that Medicaid spending increased by 10%, or \$49 billion, in the first 9 months of fiscal year 2026.

Democrats, meanwhile, argued that health services will be slashed under the law.

"Deliberately reducing health insurance coverage for less affluent families," said Sen. Jeff Merkley (Ore.), top Democrat on the committee, "that's not tackling fraud."

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