Democrats Seek Details on Trump's Nursing Home Inspector Cuts

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Summary by Bloomberg AI

- Democratic lawmakers are pressing the Trump administration for details on a new policy to allow thousands of nursing homes to avoid rigorous annual inspections.
- The plan reduces inspection protocols, requires fewer on site surveyors, and removes required reviews of certain areas, such as rehabilitative care and nutrition services.
- The lawmakers ask the CMS to provide evidence and justification for the efficacy and legal basis of the Risk-Based Survey program and to commit to greater transparency and accountability.

Democratic lawmakers are pressing the Trump administration for details on a new policy to allow thousands of nursing homes to avoid rigorous annual inspections.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) led a **letter** to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator Mehmet Oz on Tuesday seeking clarity on the agency's inspection process, which would apply less comprehensive reviews of about 1,700 previously high-performing nursing homes to cut costs for the federal government. Sens. Mazie K. Hirono (D-Hawaii), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) also signed the letter.

The **plan** in effect since September reduces inspection protocols, requires fewer on site surveyors, and removes required reviews of rehabilitative care, nutrition services, and facilities' physical environment, among other areas.

The Democrats cite data from the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care highlighting concerns over the criteria the CMS used to identify lower-risk facilities eligible for reduced inspection standards.

The group's report found 27 currently eligible nursing homes had been flagged for resident abuse on Medicare's online nursing home comparison tool since September 2025 and nearly 500 nursing homes earmarked for abbreviated surveys had not completed standard inspections in over a year.

The lawmakers ask CMS to provide evidence and justification for the efficacy and legal basis of the Risk-Based Survey program, including how qualifying criteria were selected and how the program protects against missed or inadequate identification of resident harm.
They also ask the agency to commit to greater transparency and accountability, including public reporting of comparative outcomes, oversight of facilities' marketing of their RBS designation, and clear protocols for handling disqualifying events.

"Essentially, it is a coin flip if RBS nursing homes will retain the quality indicators that grant them exemptions from full inspection requirements. And with the new policy in place, it is a virtual certainty that watered-down inspections will miss key deficiencies that put residents at risk," the lawmakers wrote.

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