

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. Look, as we all know, as the cliché goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. And while our colleagues on the other side are heralding the program that they produced, through what I believe to be their good intentions, they are terribly misguided.

But it does draw strong philosophical differences between the two parties and our approach. Yes, you would like to privatize Social Security. Yes, you would like to privatize Medicare. And this bill, essentially, is the privatization of Medicare masquerading as prescription drug relief and forbids explicitly the Secretary of Health and Human Services from negotiating directly for lower price while the VA commissioner does.

But then you say you introduce competition. Wow. Everybody is for competition. So how do all these plans, why were they enticed into it? The government pays and incentivizes the private sector to get involved in this? That is interesting competition. They incentivize the private sector to compete against the government program. They fund them the money.

Oh, and by the way, there is no penalty and no risk if they pull out. The only penalty and risk are on the elderly's backs, because they can cancel the formulary, they can pull out with no risk and no penalty. It is only the people that fall into the doughnut hole and only the people that have to pay the extra prices that understand why it is so important that government step up and level the playing field for its citizens.