

Sanders unveils huge universal US health care proposal

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Senator Bernie Sanders, hours before taking the stage Sunday to debate Democratic presidential nomination favorite Hillary Clinton, unveiled his universal health care plan which would raise taxes on Americans across the board.

His "Medicare for All" proposal would save some \$6 trillion over the next decade compared with the current system, in part by eliminating "expensive and wasteful private health insurance," Sanders said.

"Universal [health care](#) is an idea that has been supported in the United States by Democratic presidents going back to Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman," he said in a statement.

"It is time for our country to join every other major industrialized nation on earth and guarantee health care to all citizens as a right, not a privilege."

The independent senator from Vermont, a self-described democratic socialist, has caught flak throughout the campaign from Clinton, who has accused him of pushing a federally administered national single-payer system.

Sanders's plan, he said Sunday, would cost \$1.38 trillion per year, expenses that would be covered through "progressive" higher tax rates, particularly on the wealthy.

Households earning \$250,000 to \$500,000 would be taxed at 37 percent, slightly above their current rate, while the wealthiest—those making \$10 million or more annually—would be taxed at a rate of 52 percent, substantially higher than the current top bracket of 39.6 percent.

Taxpayers would also be slapped with a 2.2 percent "premium" based on income, and businesses would face a 6.2 percent health care payroll tax.

Estate taxes on the wealthiest Americans would also rise.

A Clinton aide described Sanders's plan as a "harried" release before the debate.

"When you're running for president and you're serious about getting results for the American people, details matter—and Senator Sanders is making them up as he goes along," Clinton spokesman Brian Fallon said.

A University of Massachusetts at Amherst economist, Gerald Friedman, analyzed the plan and concluded it would save \$6 trillion over the next 10 years compared to the current system, Sanders said.

According to Friedman's calculations, the typical family earning \$50,000 a year would save nearly \$6,000 annually in health care costs.

Savings would ultimately accrue because the system, which would expand the popular Medicare health care program for seniors to everyone, would dramatically reduce overall [health care costs](#) including current private premiums and deductibles, according to Friedman's analysis.

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