

**Testimony of Mehmet Oz, MD**  
**Nominee of President Trump to be**  
**CMS Administrator**

*Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance*

*March 14, 2025*

Thank you, Chairman Crapo and Ranking Member Wyden, for inviting me to appear before this Committee today.

I want to begin by thanking President Trump for his passionate desire to Make America Healthy Again and for nominating me to support that vision.

I also want to thank Secretary Kennedy for having confidence in my capacity to help make a meaningful, measurable difference in the health and wellbeing of the American people.

Finally, I want to thank my family for their love and support. I'm blessed to have them with me today, and I'd like to introduce my wife, Lisa. If I can keep making wise decisions, like marrying Lisa 40 years ago, I can keep up with the demanding task of administering CMS.

Mr. Chairman, I begin with a simple premise: great societies protect their most vulnerable. And, we are great people. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure CMS provides Americans access to superb care, especially to those who need it the most: our young, disabled, and elderly.

This commitment has been a lifelong passion.

My physician father immigrated here because he saw the U.S. as a beacon of hope and a land of opportunity where my decisions mattered.

For example, I was a student athlete at Harvard and I was surprised that my medical school curriculum at the University of Pennsylvania offered no nutrition classes.

So I became president of the student body ... and created one. My MBA at Wharton also helped, as I learned skills necessary to manage a large organization.

Next, I began my career at Columbia University in Spanish Harlem, which at the time was considered the Murder Capital of the country, and witnessed our health care system fail underserved communities.

So I went to work, advancing high tech, life-saving medical breakthroughs from mechanical hearts to the Mitraclip – a minimally invasive device to fix heart valves that saves lives while reducing costs.

I also pushed for low tech preventive strategies, like healthier lifestyles for my patients. Lisa and I started the teen foundation, Healthcorps, which has touched the lives of millions of people across the country.

All along, I was publishing hundreds of academic articles and a bunch of NY Times best-selling books, which culminated in the Dr. Oz TV Show. We hosted health advocates from all walks of life and won ten Emmy Awards for outstanding work.

I share my story with you to highlight that everything I have done, educationally and professionally, has prepared me for this precise moment in time which offers a monumental opportunity and challenge.

My TV audience has heard me say that doctors have the responsibility to tell patients what they need to know, even if the message is uncomfortable. So in that vein, here are a few painful truths that should concern everyone in this room:

- Health care expenditures are growing two percent to three percent faster than our economy.
- The Medicare trust fund will be insolvent within a decade.
- Medicaid is the number one expense for most States, consuming 30 percent of their budgets and crowding out essential services like schools and public safety.
- Our health care cost per person is twice that of other developed nations, and chronic disease linked to poor lifestyle choices drives three fourths of these costs.
- 43 percent of Americans are considered obese, quadrupling since 1980. We are twice as obese as Europeans and nine times more obese than Japan. 75% of our young people cannot even qualify for military service.
- Our maternal mortality rate is twice that of other wealthy nations, which puts us in last place behind more than 50 countries.
- And medical errors are currently the number three cause of death in America.

These are some of the reasons why our life expectancy is five years shorter than comparable countries. This public health crisis threatens our national security by adding to a national debt that is defeating us from within. Witnessing our fellow Americans suffer needlessly is also a moral failing.

As a heart surgeon, I can attest that the most expensive care is poor quality care. We have a generational opportunity to fix our health care system and help people stay healthy—longer.

That's why President Trump wants to "love and cherish" Medicare and Medicaid ... because he believes every American should get the care they want, need, and deserve.

To achieve this mission, CMS should work with Congress to find efficiencies and stabilize our insurance markets while making it easier and more affordable for Americans to adopt healthy lifestyles.

America is too great for small dreams. So here are three big ideas I want to pursue, if confirmed by the Senate.

First, we should empower beneficiaries with better tools and more transparency, so that they can better manage their health and navigate the complex health care system. For example, the President's Executive Order on Transparency shifts power to the American people.

Second, we should incentivize doctors, and all health care providers to optimize their care with real time information within their workflow. Artificial intelligence can liberate doctors and nurses from paperwork so they can focus more on the patient.

And third, let's be aggressive in modernizing our tools to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. This will stop unscrupulous people from stealing from vulnerable Americans and extend the life of the Medicare trust fund.

I ask for your permission to start sprinting after these goals, so together we can provide access to better care, deliver better outcomes, and Make America Healthy Again. I look forward to your questions, and I pray for your support.