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Medicare Turns Fifty On July 30, 2015

- On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law Medicare, which provides low-cost hospitalization and medical insurance for the nation's elderly. The legislation remains an important legacy of LBJ's "Great Society" society initiative.
- At the White House bill-signing ceremony, Johnson enrolled Harry S. Truman as the first Medicare beneficiary and presented him with the nation's first Medicare card.
- Some 19 million people enrolled in Medicare when it went into effect in 1966.
- In 1972, eligibility for the program was extended to Americans under 65 with certain disabilities and people of all ages with permanent kidney disease requiring dialysis or transplant.
- As of 2014, 54 million Americans were on Medicare.

What's Next?

- Spring 2015 Actions: We face major challenges with both the U.S. House and Senate controlled by the GOP. House and Senate budget votes involving Medicare are already on the immediate horizon, and Alliance members are responding with letters to the editor and op-eds, video mesages, and outreach on social media.
- July 30th, 2015 - Medicare's 50th Birthday: DC Rally and Celebration on the birthday; Alliance for Retired Americans Legislative Conference; Rallies and Celebrations in the States.

Fact Sheet: Social Security and Medicare Facts and Figures for 2015 - See what's changed this year