

Medicare Drug Price Negotiations Target of Trump Executive Action

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But will potential pharmaceutical tariffs nullify lower prescription costs? Plus Biden knocks DOGE Social Security job cuts.

By Mary Helen Gillespie

Medicare and Social Security, two of the top priorities for older Americans facing retirement, are part of the chaotic national political discourse once again after President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed an [executive order](#) focused on lowering U.S. drug prices. Meanwhile, his predecessor blasted the new Department of Government Efficiency's cost-cutting hunt at the Social Security Administration.

The executive order was the largest action to date by the second Trump administration on prescription drug costs but experts said it will probably not cause significant overall price decreases except in upcoming Medicare Part D negotiations, [according to a New York Times report](#).

And even those proposed Medicare Part D savings — impacting 68 million older Americans — may be erased if the Trump administration decides to issue tariffs on imported pharmaceuticals.

The Department of Commerce on Monday [filed notice](#) it would investigate the effects on “national security” from the importation of drugs and their ingredients. Such investigations are seen as precursors to tariffs.

Also on Tuesday former President Joe Biden slammed the staffing reductions at the Social Security Administration fueled by the cost-cutting mission of Elon Musk's DOGE team. An estimated 7,000 jobs at the beleaguered agency have been targeted to be removed this year, prompting outcries from older and disabled Americans, their advocates and lawmakers.

As reported by [The Washington Post](#), Biden's first public remarks since leaving office blasted the drastic cost cuts as a "hatchet job" causing deep worries for Social Security beneficiaries.

"People are now genuinely concerned for the first time in history, for the first and only time in history, that their Social Security benefits may be delayed or interrupted. They've gotten it during wartime, during recessions, during the pandemic. No matter what they got it," Biden said. "But now, for the first time ever, that may change. It would be a calamity for millions of families, millions of people."

Biden spoke before the [Advocates, Counselors and Representatives for the Disabled](#), a nonprofit advocacy group headed by Martin O'Malley, his last Social Security chief.
