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IS CAKE GOOD FOR COUGHS? AND OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FEDERAL BUDGET PROPOSAL AND MEDICARE

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The proposed federal budget doesn't cut Medicare, it just slows Medicare's growth; or at least so we are told. We are also hearing that cuts to hospital payments, reducing home care visits, and the introduction of payment caps for all Medicare covered services will not hurt health care. Not true.

“I remember history lessons about the rich forgetting about everyone else,” says Judith Stein, executive director of the Center for Medicare Advocacy. “The answer from one government to those in need was ‘Let them eat cake’. This is beginning to feel like that.”

“What are our priorities?” asks Ms. Stein. “On the day that Coretta Scott King is buried and our President and the media rightly laud her accomplishments on behalf of all people who do not have a seat at the table, it is time, in her memory, to insist on truth and fairness. It is time to ask hard questions about how our government spends. That is the way to honor the legacy of Mrs. King.”

This budget gives to the rich: Continuing massive tax cuts. It takes from the poor: Cutting health care funding for older people and people with disabilities. “If you care about all Americans, now is the time to speak out,” Ms. Stein continues. “Insist that we continue the successful and cost-effective traditional Medicare program that has opened doors to necessary health care for 40 years. If money is the real issue, stop Medicare’s reckless spending on managed care, private drug plans, and un-negotiated payments for Part D drugs. Insist that the Medicare program be first and foremost for sick people, not for powerful industries. Do it for Mrs. King.”