



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 2, 2019

## Sanders to Introduce Plan to Have Federal Government Pay Off Medical Bills

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After a woman at an August 30 town hall in Florence, South Carolina, asked Senator and presidential candidate Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.): “Is there anything in your [healthcare] plan that would actually work for people that are drowning right now for their medical debt?” he replied:



Were looking at that right now. In another piece of legislation that we’re going to be offering we will eliminate medical debt in this country. I mean, just stop and think for a second. Why should people be placed in financial duress? For what crime did you commit? You got a serious illness? That is not what this country should be about.

While speaking with reporters following the town hall, Sanders said, “In the midst of a dysfunctional health care system, what we have got to do is say that you cannot go bankrupt. You cannot end up in financial distress, because you’re terribly sick. That’s cruel, and that is something we’ve got to end.”

While Sanders did not say specifically how the debt would be eliminated, he did provide a clue as to how it would work when he said, “under this plan, the federal government [i.e., the taxpayers] will negotiate and pay off past-due medical bills in collection that have been reported to credit agencies.”

[The New American](#) reported two years ago reported that while standing before a crowd of left-wing politicians, interest groups, and labor unions, Sanders had unveiled legislation to create a national single-payer healthcare system.

“Today, we begin the long and difficult struggle to end the international embarrassment of the United States being the only major country on earth not to guarantee health care to all its people,” the self-described socialist senator said.

At the time, we noted,

Sanders’ Medicare for All Act would, over a four-year period, move all U.S. residents from their current public or private insurance programs to a single federal program with comprehensive coverage and no copayments except in the case of prescription drugs. Such a program would go far beyond Medicare, making Uncle Sam the sole source of health insurance in the nation — private insurance would be outlawed — therefore giving Washington total control over the healthcare system.

*The Atlantic* described Sanders’ plan as “the U.K.’s [National Health Service] on steroids.”

Fifty years after the British National Health Service was formed, supposedly to rid the country of



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healthcare inequality, a U.K. government task force released the Atcheson Report, which found that inequality was worse than when NHS began.

Sanders has embraced socialist ideas since the age of 23, when he joined the Young Peoples Socialist League, the youth wing of the Socialist Party USA.

*Photo: AP Images*

*Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at [wmass@thenewamerican.com](mailto:wmass@thenewamerican.com).*

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