

Congressional Budget Office Scoring: Economist Statement

The undersigned economists support reforming the Congressional Budget Act to require long-term estimates that better identify the benefits of health care prevention programs.

We believe the current practice of the Congressional Budget Office to produce budget estimates in three-, five-, seven-, or ten-year increments is incapable of capturing both the costs and the benefits of programs extending beyond the budget window.

This dynamic is particularly harmful to efforts to improve the overall health of the American population through federal prevention programs. The benefits of prevention programs often take years or decades to materialize, but they can have a powerful impact on population health and the cost of federal health care programs. Finite budget windows, even windows extending out ten years, generally fail to capture these benefits.

To address this challenge, we support reforming the Budget Act to allow for long-term analysis of prevention policies to ensure that such policies are more accurately judged on both their costs and benefits.

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