

G. V. Sonny Montgomery Weekly Radio Show

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Audio begins at 00:15

Interviewer: This is Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington. As the ranking member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, you have the opportunity to look out for veterans department activities in our state. What's going on with our veterans programs and facilities in Mississippi?

Montgomery: We feel real good about Mississippi and the and the veterans programs. In fact, I wanna mention this on our broadcast here today. One of the high officials of the veterans department said Congressman in Mississippi now you're going to have the best facilities of any other state for your veterans soon as you get those three nursing homes built and some other construction, we've got going on down there. So, we're very very proud that we're in good shape as far as taking care of the veteran is concerned. As most Mississippians know we're building three additional state nursing homes for veterans which one will be built in in Oxford, Kosciusko, and in Collins, Mississippi. Now we already have on in Jackson, the State Better Nursing Home there that's going well. That's been operating for a number of years. It's helped Mississippians. Now these three nursing homes will be will be open in in May and and June, they're 150 bed and and we we think that most Mississippians whether whether they have a fair income or no income will be able to get in into these veterans facilities. They don't belong to the federal government, they belong to the state of Mississippi and we'll have to run 'em. The state legislature has been very generous. They had to put up part of the money to build these nursing homes in these three sites that I named. And quite frankly Mississippi will be one of the better states of the 50 states that have nursing home facilities to take care of our veterans. And that's what we're trying to do in in in the veterans and I served on the committee for a long time. It looks like we're not gone build any more big veterans hospitals but we're going to expand the outpatient clinics which we've done in Biloxi and in Jackson to put veterans in outpatient clinics, bring em in, send 'em home, they can sleep in their own beds. But they're telling us they're not going to build any more big veterans hospitals. And we've got 171 of 'em across the country now and 2 of them are located in Jackson and in Biloxi. Now moving away from the veterans nursing homes will which will be open and will be taking patients in May and June. We we have building on the grounds of the veterans hospital in Jackson a a benefits building. Where an individual on their compensation, their service connected pensions or their educational benefits other types of benefits can go to this building. It will be completed this summer I believe, and it joins on most the veterans hospitals. So, what you've got there in for Mississippi for our veterans kind of a one stop operation. You go to benefits, look at your claims for additional pension or or compensation. Then you can go over to the medical which is only a couple 100 yards away and you get some type of physical. So, the benefits building is a tremendous building. It's gone be about 5 or 6 stories there, where most of our veterans facilities far as benefits are concerned will be located in that in that one one stop and as I recall the University of Mississippi Medical

School did give us that land adjacent to our state hospital there. So, we're we're in good shape and I'm very very proud of that.

Interviewer: One of the issues in which all sides apparently do agree is the level of savings in the Medicare program when they talk about the Balance Budget Deal. Could you assure Medicare recipients that any budget plan will preserve Medicare?

Montgomery: Medicare is going to be alright. It's going to be an increase every year if we come up with 7-year budget. But it won't be 12 or 11% per year it probably will be 6 or 7 % increase. It it will mean in Medicare some of the services for the for the hospitals or fees for the rooms, professional people there, the doctors, some of their fees might be slowed down on increase or they might not have any increase at all. But but basically the the the Medicare recipient which we all are now just about, will be protected no problem. You might have to make some small sacrifice, your up-front payment on on Medicare might go up a few dollars but you've got to do that. But Medicare will be protected.

Interviewer: Thank you Congressman. This has been Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington.

Audio ends at 05:20