Mariannette Miller-Meeks takes money from the drug and insurance industry and backs their special interests plans. No wonder Miller-Meeks supports raising the retirement age and ending the Medicare guarantee. She also blamed the rising cost of health care on Medicare.

### Miller-Meeks Insurance And Pharma Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>12/11/19</td>
<td>American Academy of Ophthalmology Inc Political Committee (OPHTHPAC)</td>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
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<td>9/20/18</td>
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<td>515 E Locust Street Suite 400 Des Moines, IA 50309</td>
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<td>10/3/18</td>
<td>Wellmark, Inc. PAC</td>
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<td>$500</td>
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<td>1/8/19</td>
<td>Iowa Pharmacy PAC</td>
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<td>1/9/2019</td>
<td>Iowa Health PAC</td>
<td>1531 NE Williamsburg Drive Ankeny, IA 50021</td>
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<td>Iowa Health PAC</td>
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<td>9/19/2019</td>
<td>UnitedHealth Group, Inc. PAC of Iowa</td>
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<td>10/21/2019</td>
<td>Iowa Providers PAC</td>
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<td>Federation of Iowa Insurers PAC</td>
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[Iowa Secretary Of State, 10/19/19, 1/19/2020; Political Moneyline, accessed 6/1/20; Maplight, accessed 6/1/20]

**2020: Miller-Meeks Supported Raising The Retirement Age.** “Tonight when it came to money matters, Republican Mariannette Miller-Meeks supports looking at raising the retirement age.” [NBC13, 9/25/20]

**In A 2008 Project Vote Smart Questionnaire, Miller-Meeks Supported Raising The Retirement Age.**

- [X] a) Allow workers to invest a portion of their payroll tax in private accounts that they manage themselves.
- [X] b) Ensure the viability of Social Security by increasing the payroll tax.
- [X] c) Decrease benefits paid to retirees.
- [X] d) Support proportional increases of Social Security benefits based on the cost of living index.
- [X] e) Raise the retirement age for individual eligibility to receive full Social Security benefits.
- (c) Other or expanded principles

[Vote Smart, Accessed 6/22/20]
Miller-Meeks Supported Voucher Plan for Medicare. “Agree! RT @texmed: Alabama Dr. Jeff Terry: Medicare premium support “may not be politically correct, but it is medically correct.” #AMAmtg” [@miller-meeks, Twitter, 6/17/12]

The Miller-Meeks’ Supported Program Would Replace Medicare Insurance Coverage By Giving Medicare Recipients A Fixed Dollar Amount To Buy Insurance On The Private Marketplace. “The ad also references a tweet Miller-Meeks made supporting a Medicare Premium Support program in Paul Ryan's 2012 budget proposal. That program would replace Medicare insurance coverage by giving Medicare recipients a fixed dollar amount to buy insurance on the private marketplace. The Congressional Budget Office released a report in 2013 that looked at two models for a premium support program. Depending on the model used, the report showed costs to beneficiaries could rise 11 percent or fall 6 percent. Both models showed a net savings in taxpayer spending on Medicare. [Cedar Rapids Gazette, 10/4/14]

See primary source document, “20141004 Cedar Rapids Gazette”

Miller-Meeks Blamed The Rise Of Health Care Costs On Medicare And Overuse. “Two words, competition and insurance. If you look at the cost of health care in the United States, the rapid rise began in 1970. And the rise in health care costs exceeded inflation. This is because Medicare was instituted in 1965. As seniors became more adept at utilizing the Medicare system to pay for care that they previously had not accessed, the cost escalated. We also know from numerous health care studies […] show that when someone doesn't bear the cost of health care, they utilize more. So overutilization began to be the norm.” [Mariannette Miller Meeks Conversation on Health Care, 00:00:28, 9/4/09] (VIDEO)
INTRODUCTION

'But Mariannette Miller-Meeks blames the rising cost of health care on Medicare. And praised a radical plan ending Medicare's guarantee, costing seniors thousands more. Miller-Meeks would even raise the retirement age.'

Source of claim: TV ad from the Dave Loebsack campaign.

ANALYSIS

Health care is a key issue for Mariannette Miller-Meeks' campaign, given her career as an ophthalmologist and the director for the Iowa Department of Public Health.

In 2009, Miller-Meeks posted videos on YouTube looking at issues facing the nation's health care system. In it, she blames the rising cost of health care in part on Medicare.

'If you look at the cost of health care in the United States, the rapid rise began in 1970,' she says in the video. 'This is because Medicare was instituted in 1965. As seniors became more adept at utilizing the Medicare system to pay for care they had previously not accessed, the cost escalated.' Miller-Meeks is using Medicare as an example of the larger issue that she says is to blame for rising costs, namely '(lack of) competition and insurance.' In the video, Miller-Meeks argues that patients with insurance, such as Medicare, get treatments they don't need because they don't directly bear the cost. She also blames government mandates on what insurance covers, such as birth control, for forcing some people to pay for more coverage than they need.

The ad also references a tweet Miller-Meeks made supporting a Medicare Premium Support program in Paul Ryan's 2012 budget proposal. That program would replace Medicare insurance coverage by giving Medicare recipients a fixed dollar amount to buy insurance on the private marketplace.

The Congressional Budget Office released a report in 2013 that looked at two models for a premium support program. Depending on the model used, the report showed costs to beneficiaries could rise 11 percent or fall 6 percent. Both models showed a net savings in taxpayer spending on Medicare. In 2010, Miller-Meeks told Radio Iowa she supported the idea of raising the eligibility age for Medicare benefits from 65 to 67, but only for future generations.

CONCLUSION

MOSTLY TRUE
This ad presents accurate information in a somewhat misleading manner. Miller-Meeks used Medicare as an example of why health care costs are rising in her 2009 video but she ultimately is blaming expanding insurance coverage and government mandates.

Miller-Meeks also backed Paul Ryan's 2012 plan for Medicare premium support payments but it is unclear whether that will lead to rising costs to seniors. Even the CBO report notes 'as the agency refines its modeling approach and considers alternative options for a premium support system, its findings could change.' While this ad lacks some much-needed context, the limited facts presented are accurate, which is why we rate it mostly true.