

[The Rutland Herald](#)

Rep. Peter Welch heard a lot of concerns Thursday from physicians and medical administrators who have reservations about a congressional budget proposal that would cut and change the delivery of Medicare services.

Last week, federal lawmakers passed the 2012 budget out of the House with cuts to Medicare which would be transformed into a voucher system in which recipients would buy health insurance from private insurance companies.

The Congressional Budget Office predicted that some recipients would pay up to \$7,000 more health care expenses if the proposed changes are made.

At a roundtable discussion attended by representatives from a number of Rutland area organizations, including Rutland Regional Medical Center, the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Community of Vermont Elders, Rutland Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice, Welch heard plenty of concerns about the proposed budget.

"This proposal would throw people back to the wolves," said COVE director Virginia Milkey.

With ongoing debate in Washington about reducing the burgeoning deficit, Welch predicted that politics would prove to be an obstacle to finding middle ground on Medicare.