

# House's spending plan loses in Senate

Senate rejects GOP budget that called for big changes in Medicare

By DAVID LIGHTMAN and WILLIAM DOUGLAS McClatchy

Published 12:01 a.m., Thursday, May 26, 2011 – Albany Times Union

WASHINGTON -- The Senate on Wednesday rejected the [House of Representatives'](#) controversial Republican budget plan by 57-40, one that would dramatically revamp [Medicare](#) while cutting spending by \$4.4 trillion over 10 years to reduce future federal budget deficits.

Five Republicans joined every Democrat in the 57-40 vote killing the measure, which calls for transforming Medicare into a program in which future beneficiaries -- people now 54 years old and younger -- would be given a subsidy to purchase health insurance rather than have the government directly pay hospital and doctor bills.

The primary purpose of Tuesday's vote, engineered by the [Democrats](#) who run the Senate, was to score political points. Democrats were giddy all day after they won an upset victory Tuesday in a special election for an upstate [New York U.S. House](#) seat in a historically Republican district. Winner Kathy Hochul had campaigned vigorously against the [House GOP](#) budget, charging that it would devastate Medicare. Democrats seized on her victory as evidence that their intense campaign against the [House Medicare](#) plan was working.

Republicans protested vigorously, saying the New York result had been badly misread, and derided the Senate vote to reject the House GOP budget as a cynical waste of time.

The House plan, authored by [Budget Committee](#) Chairman [Paul Ryan](#), R-Wis., won House approval last month, 235-193. All yes voters were Republicans, while four GOP lawmakers joined 189 Democrats in opposition.