

# Health Policy Advocate and Longtime Independent Lee Benham Announces Candidacy for U.S. Senate in Nebraska

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BELLEVUE, NE, UNITED STATES, February 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Lee Benham, an insurance professional and nationally recognized health care policy advocate, announced today that he will seek the Democratic nomination for U.S. [Senate](#) in Nebraska. Benham, a former Libertarian health policy adviser and lifelong independent with fiscally conservative values, is launching a reform-centered campaign to challenge the status quo in Washington and fix the broken structure of how health care is financed in America.



“I’ve spent over 35 years working inside the system politicians only debate — but rarely understand,” said Benham. “I’ve sat at kitchen tables with families trying to afford premiums, and at boardroom tables with employers trying to provide coverage. I’ve seen firsthand how our current system suppresses wages, inflates the cost of goods, drives up property taxes, and wastes trillions of taxpayer dollars.”

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ESI is the largest tax expenditure in the federal budget and the top driver of employee wage suppression,” Benham said. “If our Senator won’t even mention it, he’s not capable of fixing it.””

*Lee Benham*

Benham's campaign is focused on introducing age-based tax credits — a voluntary, defined-contribution health financing model that would let individuals, not employers or insurance companies, control their health care dollars. He argues that this approach would restore choice, reduce

government waste, empower workers, and finally give taxpayers a return on investment.

"I'm running as a Democrat because the party that says it stands for working families should be the one fixing this," said Benham. "This isn't about left vs. right. It's about people vs. a system that's been failing them for decades."

Benham has voted mostly Republican in past elections, aligning with personal responsibility and fiscal discipline. But in his words, both parties have failed to fix the root cause of America's health care crisis — the way care is paid for.

"Republicans talked about repeal but never addressed the employer-sponsored model that drives costs. Democrats expanded access but never reformed the system that suppresses wages and inflates premiums," said Benham. "I didn't leave the Republican Party because I changed — I left because they stopped offering real solutions."

Benham's age-based tax credit model is grounded in transparency, fairness, and portability. It draws from his work helping launch the nation's first Medicare Medical Savings Account (MSA) in 2007 — a defined-contribution plan that deposits government funds directly into the hands of seniors to pay for coverage and care. Benham also served on Dr. Lee Hieb's Libertarian health policy task force during her 2014 gubernatorial campaign, further demonstrating his long-term cross-partisan reform advocacy.

In 2025, Benham authored [\\*TrumpCare: Age-Based Tax Credits\\*](#), a policy framework that outlines how his proposal gives people control of the dollars already being spent in their name. "Despite all the noise in American politics, Donald Trump was the only national figure who said something fundamentally true about health care: 'Give the money to the people, not the insurance companies.' I took that insight and wrote the blueprint to make it real."

According to Benham, Nebraska taxpayers are currently paying nearly \$40,000 per year for each state employee's family health plan, yet no meaningful reform has been proposed. "Health care is the largest inflationary pressure in the state budget — and the single biggest driver of wage suppression across the economy. Employer-sponsored health insurance is the largest tax expenditure in the federal budget, costing nearly a half a trillion dollars a year and growing annually in forgone revenue through tax exclusions for premiums and benefits. Trillions of dollars wasted and our own senator doesn't even list healthcare reform on his website. If our elected leaders won't even talk about it, they're not capable of fixing it."

Benham's proposals do not involve eliminating coverage or forcing people off their plans. "This is about restoring ownership and choices and aligning incentives. It's about letting people choose their doctors, while giving local governments and school districts relief from runaway premium costs."

He says the core values behind age-based tax credits reflect what Democrats should be fighting for:

Fairness: - Support based on age, not job status or lobbying power  
Transparency: - Visible, honest, and capped health spending  
Empowerment- Wages returned to workers instead of disappearing into hidden premiums  
Fiscal responsibility: - Defined taxpayer exposure — no more blank checks  
Dignity: - Coverage people own and control, not coverage tied to employment or bureaucracy

Benham also credits Nebraska's Democratic history as part of his political inspiration. "Senators like Bob Kerrey weren't afraid to challenge their own party when the facts demanded it. That's the tradition I'm proud to step into — pragmatic, solution-oriented, and focused on outcomes, not slogans."

His campaign is now raising grassroots support ahead of the March filing deadline to appear on the Democratic primary ballot.

His website, [leebenhamforsenate.com](http://leebenhamforsenate.com) includes his full policy platform, historical white papers, and press appearances dating back nearly a decade.

"This campaign is about fixing what's broken," Benham said. "We need to stop protecting a system that's hurting working families. If we're serious about helping people, we have to start by changing how we pay for care."

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