



Protecting Medicaid: A Lifeline for Our Communities

**As the Reconciliation process moves forward,
NETWORK urges you to protect Medicaid from cuts or “restructuring.”**

Do not sacrifice the health of millions of people to meet the ultra-wealthy’s demands for even greater riches.

Our country depends on a strong Medicaid program.

The Catholic Church, like other faith communities across the U.S., has long affirmed that health care is a basic right for all people.

NETWORK is committed to protecting access to health care for all—not just a privileged few. In a country where medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy, all people of faith understand the moral obligation to protect our families and communities with quality, affordable health care.

We need Medicaid because:

- **Medicaid serves more than 71 million people—that is, more than 21% of people in the U.S.** Medicaid beneficiaries include people with disabilities, seniors, children, and working people.
- **Medicaid covers more than 37 million children, serving as a critical tool in fostering future generations of thriving adults.** More than half of all Medicaid beneficiaries are children. Medicaid gives our kids a chance to maintain their health as youth and a future with higher rates of high school and college completion and higher wages as adults. And, with **more than 40% of U.S. births covered by Medicaid**, the program is a lifeline to preventing maternal mortality and to getting infants off to a healthy start in their crucial first year of life.
- **Our veterans and seniors rely on Medicaid.** Medicaid recipients include **more than 7.2 million senior citizens** who cannot handle the rising costs of nursing home care, home health, and other care beyond their Medicare coverage. Similarly, nearly **one million veterans** need Medicaid to help with their complex health needs not paid for by veterans’ programs.
- **Medicaid strengthens our economic stability.** Two out of three non-elderly Medicaid enrollees work in our country’s most essential but lowest-paying jobs, too often with no other health insurance options or sick leave. Already, medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy in the U.S. Without Medicaid, **15.2 million of these workers** would be just one family medical crisis away from economic disaster.
- **Our health care systems depend on Medicaid, which is the nation’s largest health insurer.** Our hospitals, clinics, and other health programs and facilities rely on Medicaid for financial stability. Many health providers operate at the margins, especially in rural areas where over 600 rural hospitals were at risk of closure in 2023, mostly in states that had not accepted Medicaid expansion. **Cutting Medicaid will mean a profound health care crisis for our rural communities.**

Yet, some lawmakers in Congress want to drastically cut Medicaid in cruel and counterproductive ways, including:

- Lifetime eligibility caps that would limit an individual's lifetime eligibility for Medicaid enrollment to a fixed period, regardless of their financial status or health conditions. **These caps would leave millions of us and our families with no benefits for much of our lifetimes.**
- Brutal cuts to the amount of federal Medicaid funding that matches state funding in the 41 states that have joined the needed and effective Medicaid expansion program, leaving states to make devastating choices. **Just a 10% reduction in the federal match would cost states \$50 billion that they cannot afford.**
- Work-reporting requirements that have proven to be ineffective and administratively burdensome and costly for states. **Of the one-third of non-elderly Medicaid enrollees who do not have reportable employment, most have disabilities, care for family members, or attend educational programs.** Punishing them is wrong and counterproductive.
- "Restructuring" Medicaid into a series of block grants that limit the federal share of Medicaid funding to fixed dollar grants to the states. These proposals will upend the current federal/state cost-sharing balance and burden states with overwhelming financial strains—**leading to reduced coverage for our families and communities.**
- Rigid per capita funding schemes that will allow each state a fixed amount of federal funding per enrollee, ignoring enrollees' actual need for services, public health emergencies, and ever-rising health care cost inflation. Like block grants, **federal per capita funding schemes will only shift unsustainable costs to the states**, who in turn will inevitably impose those costs onto people and families who desperately need affordable health care coverage.
- **These so-called "restructuring" efforts are just thinly veiled attempts to weaken Medicaid.**

Slashing Medicaid is immoral, reckless, and utterly bad policy that will cause enormous suffering for our communities.

Cuts to Medicaid will harm workers and their families, the elderly with complex care needs, people with disabilities, and children whose futures depend on a healthy start.

These cuts and "restructurings" will strain state budgets and result in the closure and cutback of needed medical services and facilities across the U.S.

NETWORK urges you to join us and communities of faith nationwide in resisting any reductions in federal Medicaid funding during the reconciliation process. Use your vote to protect our health.

NETWORK is indebted to KFF, Protect Our Care, and Families USA, whose analyses of Medicaid and its impact on the nation's wellbeing helped to inform this document.