



National Patient
Advocate Foundation

February 24, 2025

US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
VIA E-Mail

Re: Urgent Request from Patients: Protect Medicaid from Proposed Cuts

Dear Members of the United States House of Representatives:

National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) is writing with urgency to ask that you protect Medicaid from proposed cuts on behalf of patients and families experiencing complex and chronic conditions across the United States.

We are deeply concerned about the staggering cuts to Medicaid now being considered by the US House of Representatives as part of budget resolution discourse. Medicaid coverage is a lifeline to health and long-term care for 83 million adults and children in the United States. It improves health outcomes, helps keeps adults working and kids learning in school, and provides financial protection from medical debt for low-income populations and under-resourced communities across the country. Medicaid is also a vital economic driver in these communities. The cuts proposed would cause health coverage loss for tens of millions of people across the country and create catastrophic consequences for enrollees, care providers, state budgets and communities.

NPAF relies on insights, lived experiences and real-world perspectives of our nationwide patient and caregiver network and the patients served by our sister organization, Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF) to guide policies we pursue. We've prioritized protecting Medicaid because patients from all walks of life and every corner of the country have made clear that access to needed care, along with financial and social stability is a top concern directly linked to physical, mental and behavioral health outcomes. Medicaid provides access to healthcare and practical help for limited-resourced patients and families coping with social issues, emotional ones, medical debt, household financial hardships, and other financial and social constraints that contribute to poorer health.

We know the importance of Medicaid's vitality firsthand because NPAF's patient services counterpart, PAF, delivers skilled needs navigation and direct financial assistance to patients and families in all 50 states. Needs navigation provides hands-on support to enable access to needed healthcare and address healthcare costs concerns. Since 1996, PAF has helped people find and use Medicaid and other safety net services and supports necessary for making ends meet and maintaining financial health while contending with hardships because of their medical and mental or behavioral health conditions. In 2023, PAF distributed more than \$450 million in financial support and provided direct support,

including sustained needs navigation and direct financial assistance to more than 185,000 patients from all 50 states and representing 93% of all US counties.

Here we are sharing just a few examples from among many testimonials NPAF is continuing to capture that speak to the high stakes harms of the proposed cuts for enrollees and communities:

- 1) **Parent in Pasadena, Texas:** My child and others living with a rare form of epilepsy called Dravet Syndrome rely on Medicaid to cover medical supplies and services that private insurance won't cover. My family still sat on a waitlist for 8 years before being approved for a Medicaid waiver in my state. During those 8 years, our family went into debt paying for medication, treatments, therapies and supplies.

Now that my child is 12, her coverage is vital to keeping her alive and our family able to keep our home and keep working to feed our family. Decreasing her coverage, which is limited already, would have lasting impacts. She will need assistance and support for the rest of her life. Getting rid of those supports also means she will have to live in an institution after I am gone. Not to mention her loss of supports in her education.

- 2) **Patient in Quincy, Illinois:** In 2014, I was diagnosed with endometrial and ovarian cancer. At the time, I didn't have health insurance. Despite that, my doctor agreed to treat me. I spoke with a navigator and learned I qualified for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Illinois was one of a handful of states that had extended Medicaid coverage to cover all low-income individuals, and I qualified. Medicaid covered my entire treatment cost, including my prescriptions. I didn't see one bill. *Without it, I wouldn't have been able to afford treatment, and I would have likely died.*

It's 11 years later. I'm now 61 and I have multiple health issues, including kidney cancer, an aortic root dilation, congestive heart failure and osteoarthritis in my left hip. I haven't worked since 2022 and was homeless. Medicaid continues to pay for my medical costs. Without it, I don't know what I'd do. I can't afford to lose my Medicaid coverage. I have no income, and no one will hire me. I've applied for disability and was denied. Without Medicaid, I'll die... Congress will basically be signing my death warrant if that happens. I'm terrified. It's my life on the line.

- 3) **Patient in Lincolnton, North Carolina:** It provided health insurance for my children, but NC took too long to expand Medicaid, and my husband was not insured. *He did not want to seek medical help and put his family in even more financial danger. He ultimately died from an extremely curable disease.* I practically begged him to go much sooner than he did; he responded, 'we can't afford it'. That was in Feb. of 2020.
- 4) **County Health Department employee, Marysville, Ohio:** Medicaid is a highly utilized and needed resource for many individuals who live in our community. There are a lot of people who go years without healthcare due to employment issues, lack of adequate income, or lack of services available in their area. *Medicaid allows more people to get the assistance they need, even in the short term.*

- 5) **Patient and caregiver in Richmond, Kentucky:** [Medicaid] brings healthcare to those in financial need in rural Appalachia who would otherwise not be able to afford doctors.

National Patient Advocate Foundation Urges Congress to Protect Medicaid

Medicaid is a critical cornerstone of healthcare and a vital asset to communities across the country. Funding cuts would destabilize hospitals and health systems, particularly devastating sustainability of safety-net hospitals in rural and underserved areas already most susceptible to funding fluctuation. NPAF expresses its most strident opposition to Medicaid cuts, including reductions to the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for the expansion population, implementation of per capita caps, and work reporting requirements. These measures would fundamentally alter Medicaid's financing structure, shift significant costs to states, and jeopardize the health for millions of adults and children covering every single state and county.

We urge that you instead support policies to strengthen and expand Medicaid to make the health system work for all of us. Please contact me at Rebecca.Kirch@npaf.org if NPAF can provide further information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca A. Kirch".

Rebecca A. Kirch
Executive Vice President, Policy and Programs