

Public Policy & Government Relations Update

May 2025

Volume 1: Issue 3

Summary & Priorities

The PPGR team continues to advocate here in New York State and in Washington, D.C to protect access to Medicaid, social supports and health care. We are meeting with New York State legislators through direct engagement and in coalition to protect access to gender affirming care. Our New York State priorities are to strengthen existing laws to protect providers and patients from prosecution for engaging in gender affirming care. We are also calling for New York State to fund gender-affirming care, regardless of what happens at the federal level.

At the Federal level, protecting access to Medicaid and other social support services remains our priority. We are meeting directly with Congress and collaborating with our provider network, and coalitions to maintain steady messaging in opposition to cuts.

New York State Budget

Since our last update, New York State has approved next year's budget. The budget was over a month late. The state's budget includes neither reductions in Medicaid funding nor contingency planning for impending Federal cuts to Medicaid or gender-affirming care. The Governor and legislature are likely to reconvene later this year in a special legislative session to decide on how to respond to any federal reductions in funding.

Highlights from the budget

New York State approved a plan to tax health insurance plans (MCO tax) to generate additional federal funds for the state's Medicaid program. The way it works is that health plans like Amida Care will pay a per member per month tax to the state, those funds are matched with federal funds and the bigger pool would fund higher rates

Advocating for Shield Law & Gender-Affirming Care



May 14 – Meeting with NYS Assembly Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins about Shield Law and funding Gender Affirming Care

for providers. As a result, reimbursement rates for hospitals and community health centers will increase this coming year. The MCO tax is approved by the federal government until 2027, when it is unlikely to be reapproved.

One bright spot in the budget was that funding for community health centers and Ryan White providers to replace lost funds from the pharmacy carve out, remain intact. In addition, a fund to support transitional and serving organizations was increased by \$1 Million.

Unfortunately, Ending the Epidemic Coalition efforts to extend housing assistance for people outside of New York City was not enacted.

Federal Update

Congressional Republicans continue to advance their plan to fund tax cuts for the wealthy by cutting Medicaid, food assistance and other social support programs. Just yesterday, the House of Representatives Committee on Budget narrowly moved the proposal forward despite concerns raised by constituents. House leadership is pushing for a vote on the proposal before Memorial Day.

The House proposal cuts Medicaid and social support programs by increasing red tape, increasing copayments, and restricting access to care. These measures are designed to generate savings by driving people in need off of the programs. Any saving would be used to fund tax cuts for the wealthy. Many estimate that the cuts, as currently proposed, total over **\$700b** over the next decade.

On May 20, 2025 New York State Governor Kathy Hochul outlined how the provisions in the House bill will result in nearly \$13.5 billion in annual losses for New York, and cause nearly 1.5 million New Yorkers to become uninsured should they lose Essential plan or Medicaid coverage. She outlined the losses by Congressional District [here](#).

Critically, even though the House is moving the plan forward, there remains discord between Republican legislators. For example, some legislators would like to see deeper cuts to Medicaid and others are opposed. Additionally, the Senate Republicans and the President have voiced opposition to the extent of cuts to programs like Medicaid in the house proposal.

Advocacy Working

Opinion | Josh Hawley: Don't Cut Medicaid - The New York Times

As for Missouri, it is one of 40 Medicaid expansion states — because our voters wanted it that way. In 2020, the same year Mr. Trump carried the Missouri popular vote by a decisive margin ...

www.nytimes.com

LaLota among 12 House Republicans speaking out to defend Medicaid from steep cuts



Rep. Nick LaLota (NY-1) RiverheadLOCAL/Denise Civiletti



Diana Hess of Jawonio talks to Congressman Mike Lawler at the Rally in the Valley at Clover Stadium in Pomona March 7, 2025. People with disabilities and the nonprofit agencies who serve them spoke out against threats to federal Medicaid funding. Peter Carr/The Journal News

What follows are some of the key proposed provisions to cut Medicaid and Social Support Programs:

- New work requirements in Medicaid
- Recertification twice a year instead of once a year
- New co-payments for some people on Medicaid - \$35 co-pay for each service
- Defund gender-affirming care for minors in Medicaid
- Restrict adult access to gender-affirming care via essential plans
- Restrictions on Immigrant access to care, including reducing federal funds to states that use their own funds to fund immigrant health care.
- Defund Planned Parenthood and organizations that provide access to reproductive care

Ongoing community opposition to Medicaid cuts is driving the dissent. Join us by continuing to make calls and send messages to your congressional representatives. Get others to do such too!

May 16, 2025 05:26 PM

Health care sector puts the heat on New York House delegation

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Take Action

Policy Issue

A full House vote on the US House of Representatives bill to cut Medicaid, Food Assistance and health care coverage is likely to occur before Memorial Day on the budget bill.

Republicans are discussing deeper Medicaid Cuts to get the bill passed.

Your voice is crucial in amplifying the importance of Medicaid and federal funding for those impacted by addiction and mental health conditions.

Call House Members (866-426-2631) or find them [here](#) – using your personal accounts

Message "Vote NO on the reconciliation bill.

- Medicaid provides access to essential health services to New Yorkers.
- Don't cut Medicaid, the Essential Plan or food assistance to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy.
- According to Governor Hochul's analysis, the reconciliation bill will cost New York over \$13 Billion annually.
- If you vote for this bill over 1.5 million New Yorkers will lose access to critical health care.

In addition to calling your representative these New York Representatives need to hear from you:

[Rep. Nick LaLota, NY-1: 202-225-3826 \(Long Island\)](#)

Cuts in NY 1 will cost the state over \$400M in federal funding and over 33,000 NY1 residents will lose their Medicaid insurance

[Rep. Andrew Garbarino, NY-2: 202-225-7896 \(Long Island\)](#)

Cuts in NY 2 will cost the state over will cost the state over \$400M in federal funding and over 33,000 NY2 residents will lose their Medicaid insurance

[Rep. Nicole Malliotakis, NY-11: 202-225-3371 \(Staten Island\)](#)

Cuts in NY11 will cost the state over \$400M in federal funding and over 37,000 NY11 residents will lose their Medicaid insurance

[Rep. Mike Lawler, NY-17: 202-225-6506 \(Lower Hudson Valley\)](#)

Cuts in NY-17 will cost the state over \$250M in federal funding and almost 22,000 NY17 residents will lose their Medicaid insurance

Useful Information and Links

L.A Care Health Plan made a series of YouTube shorts containing testimonies from Medicaid recipients, detailing how potential cuts to the program would affect them which can be used in the advocacy against Medicaid and Medicare cuts. These can be shared with elected officials as you engage with their offices. Take a look! Please find links to the shorts below:

- Myrra - <https://youtube.com/shorts/nPxwoEUjps?feature=share>
- Diane - <https://youtube.com/shorts/7O2r2tzGzEw?feature=share>
- Eugene - <https://youtube.com/shorts/dd1Vurdd9Pk>

KFF released a useful brief that will inform you both on what the [Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative](#) (EHE) has done to date and what the future of the EHE might look like under the current administration. In FY 2024, the last budget year with known appropriated levels, EHE funding totaled \$573.25 million, with the largest allocations for HIV prevention and for the care and treatment of people with HIV.

While this initiative brought new funding for HIV services across the country and that funding has driven a range of new activities aimed at addressing HIV, there is uncertainty about whether the Trump administration will continue funding the EHE initiative amid other cutbacks in the nation's HIV response.

The analysis can be found [here](#).

**Ending
the
HIV
Epidemic**

Below are two resources where you can track the cases that are ongoing against the federal administration:

- <https://apnews.com/projects/trump-executive-order-lawsuit-tracker/>
- <https://www.justsecurity.org/107087/tracker-litigation-legal-challenges-trump-administration/>

The federal website [Medicaid.gov](#) under the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid](#) has a very useful interactive map which shows Medicaid and Medicare enrollment in each state. The interactive map can be accessed [here](#). As of October 2024, Medicaid provides health and long-term care coverage to over 72 million Americans of all ages, predominantly those with low incomes and few other resources. Another 7.2 million children under age 18 receive payments from Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). About 23.3% of all Americans receive Medicaid or CHIP.



The Association for Community Affiliated Plans released a report regarding the impact that Medicaid and CHIP has on American communities and why it is important to protect these programs. The full report can be read [here](#).

Manatt and State Health & Value Strategies released a workbook/toolkit analyzing the impacts of the potential cuts to Medicaid and Medicare on a state by state basis. The workbook/toolkit can be found [here](#). The issue brief accompanying the workbook/toolkit can be found [here](#).

As the talks of work requirement are back, Tradeoffs has a great article which outlines what you need to know about them. The article can be read [here](#).

The Fiscal Policy Institute has released a detailed report outlining the cuts to the Medicaid Demonstration waiver, also called the 1115 Waiver. 1115 waivers are used to try out new ideas or policies within Medicaid, like expanding coverage, improving access to certain services, or addressing health disparities. Read the full report [here](#).

Medicaid & Work Requirements: A [new article](#) co-authored by Marc Cohen, Research Director at Community Catalyst's Center for Community Engagement in Health Innovation, discusses recent research using census survey data which uncovers who Medicaid work requirements truly impact. The data shows that only one in seven working-age adults covered by Medicaid would be classified as able bodied. This group of able-bodied working adults is primarily older women who were at one point part of the workforce but left to care for family. Learn more by reading the article [here](#) and the research [here](#).

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) research show that Medicaid expansion [reduces bills sent to collections](#) and [decreases bankruptcy filings](#). Significantly, [new medical debt dropped by 34 percentage points more](#) in states that expanded Medicaid as compared with states that did not

Fenway Health has written a brief on the impact of the Trump-Vance Administration's first 100 days on LGBTQI+ health equity, racial and ethnic health equity, and HIV STI prevention and care. The brief can be found [here](#), and the press release can be found [here](#). The brief examines the potential impact of:

- anti-transgender executive orders on health and well-being and the ability of transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people to access gender affirming care (GAC),
- the rescinding of federal sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) nondiscrimination regulations,
- the suppression of information about LGBTQI+, racial and ethnic, and other health disparities,
- the sudden ending of HIV and LGBTQI+ health research, and
- the defunding of HIV prevention and care programs here in the U.S. and with LGBTQI+ communities in Africa and elsewhere around the world.

Other Updates

Lawsuits Against Trump Administration Policies

On April 25, Lambda Legal filed a lawsuit on behalf of seven transgender U.S. citizens, including one who is nonbinary, challenging the Trump administration's policy denying them U.S. passports with accurate sex designations. The discriminatory passport policy exposes transgender U.S. citizens to harassment, abuse, and discrimination, in some cases endangering them abroad or preventing them from traveling, by forcing them to use identification documents that share private information against their wishes. Press release can be read [here](#).

Advocacy Actions - Presentations, Rallies and Other Engagement

Building a Resilient Movement in Uncertain Times

On April 16 and 17, Lyndel participated in a convening in Washington D.C., facilitated by [Community Education Group](#) and [Southern AIDS Coalition](#). This two-day convening brought together organizations in a conversation about how to approach discussing and making difficult decisions to chart a collective path to ensure HIV, HCV and related health services are sustained in these uncertain times.

Protecting Progress: Advancing Protections Advocacy Day in Albany

On Monday May 19, Joe joined the New Pride Agenda for the Protecting Progress: Advancing Protections Advocacy Day in Albany. Joe made remarks at the day's press conference, speaking about the need to protect both patients and providers when gender-affirming care is sought, the importance of strengthening the New York Shield Law to ensure further protections of individuals regardless of gender, as well as calling for the passing of Senator Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblymember Bronson's bill to strengthen existing legal protections for gender affirming care and further protecting providers.



Other Topics of Note

Attorney General Letitia James Sue Trump Administration Over Abrupt Cut to Access to \$1 Billion in Federal School Aid

The Trump administration abruptly cut states' access to Covid pandemic funding for school programs, saying they'd had enough time to spend it. Sixteen attorneys general and a Democratic governor sued the Trump administration on Thursday to restore access to over \$1 billion in federal pandemic relief aid for schools that was recently halted, saying that the pullback could cause acute harm to students.

The suit, led by New York's attorney general, Letitia James, and filed in Manhattan federal court, is one of the latest efforts by states to fight President Trump's clawback of funding allocated to programs he does not want the government to support. Article can be read [here](#).

Judge stops NYC Mayor Adams' admin from letting ICE on Rikers Island for at least a month

A Manhattan judge is blocking Mayor Adams' administration from letting federal immigration agents operate on Rikers Island for at least another month, extending a temporary restraining order barring the controversial effort from moving forward.

The restraining order was first issued Monday April 21 by Justice Mary Rosado in response to a lawsuit from the City Council. During a brief Manhattan Supreme Court hearing Friday April 25, Rosado ruled the restraining order should stay in place at least until the next hearing in the case. Rosado set the next hearing for May 29. Read the full article [here](#).

White House Eyes Overhaul of Federal Housing Aid to the Poor

The White House is considering deep cuts to federal housing programs, including a sweeping overhaul of aid to low-income families, in a reconfiguration that could jeopardize millions of Americans' continued access to rental assistance funds.

The potential changes primarily concern federal housing vouchers, including those more commonly known as Section 8. The exact design and cost of the retooled program is unclear, and any such change is likely to require approval from Congress, as White House budgets on their own do not carry the force of law. Federal voucher programs currently provide assistance to about 2.3 million low-income families. The full article can be read [here](#).

US Attorney General Pam Bondi directs Justice Department Employees to Enforce Policies Targeting Care for Transgender Minors

On April 22 Attorney General Pam Bondi issued a memo of directives to Justice Department employees to enforce the Trump administration's policies targeting gender-affirming care for minors, according to a copy of the memo obtained by CNN. The memo outlines several guidelines that Justice Department employees must follow in order to implement the policies outlined in Trump's executive order. Initiatives include drafting and promoting new legislation, establishing a state and federal coalition against child mutilation, and investigating medical providers and pharmaceutical companies who the memo says "mislead the public" on the side effects of gender-affirming care for minors. Read the full article [here](#).

Judges Pause Trump Policy Restricting Transgender Passport Choices, Finding it's Rooted in 'Irrational Prejudice'

A Massachusetts federal judge on Friday temporarily paused the Trump administration's passport policy removing the ability of transgender people to change their sex markers and non-binary people to get "X" markers for their travel documents.

Biden appointee U.S. District Judge Julia E. Kobick held that a group of transgender and nonbinary people who sued the administration in February were likely to succeed with arguments that they were denied their constitutional right to equal protection for a policy with little apparent motivation beyond anti-LGBT+ animus. Read the full article [here](#).

MAGA world signals it will protect Medicaid

There are growing signs that Trump-aligned forces are ready to go to war with House Republicans if they attempt to pass large Medicaid spending cuts. New polling from a top Trump campaign pollster shared exclusively with Axios has found the Medicaid program is popular among all voters, including those who cast their ballot for Trump — yet another sign of the political peril of cutting it. Read the full article [here](#).

Trump picks Casey Means for Surgeon General

President Donald Trump tapped Casey Means to serve as the country's next surgeon general, shortly after news broke he was withdrawing his first nominee. Trump said, "Casey has impeccable 'MAHA' credentials and will work closely with our wonderful Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., to ensure a successful implementation of our Agenda in order to reverse the Chronic Disease Epidemic, and ensure Great Health, in the future, for all Americans." Americans Read the full article [here](#).

Round Up

PPGR remains determined act in order to protect access to Medicaid and Gender Affirming Care. Join us by making calls and speaking out about the harmful impact of these cuts.

Sincerely,
Joe Pressley, Lyndel Urbano & Casper Christiansen