



30 Patient Organizations Oppose Legislation Threatening Healthcare for Millions of Patients

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 24, 2023) – This week, the House of Representatives is expected to consider legislation that would add so-called “work requirements” to the Medicaid program. Due to the disastrous impact this would have on access to Medicaid, which provides coverage for almost a hundred million individuals, 30 patient advocacy organizations released the following statement, urging lawmakers to vote no:

“Our organizations strongly oppose legislation adding a work, or community engagement, requirement policy to the Medicaid program. This legislation is a clear attack on access to quality and affordable healthcare with particularly devastating consequences for patients with serious, acute and chronic illnesses. We urge Congress to reject this bill.

“To be clear: these requirements are not about work, they are about paperwork, and otherwise-eligible patients will lose coverage when they get caught up in this bureaucratic red tape. In 2018, Arkansas imposed this paperwork requirement on people enrolled in Medicaid. Before a federal court halted the state’s efforts, more than 18,000 individuals who were otherwise eligible for Medicaid lost their healthcare in just seven months due to onerous paperwork requirements and additional bureaucracy. The coverage losses would be even more severe on a national scale, applying to individuals enrolled in both traditional Medicaid and Medicaid expansion.

“The ‘exemptions’ in this legislation are wholly insufficient to protect patients. The criteria in the House legislation are even narrower and more extreme than those used in Arkansas: more older adults are included and people who are medically frail would need a medical professional to verify an exemption. The intricacies of deciding who is and is not able to work is outside of the scope of most medical providers and can be very complex decisions. Additionally, exemption processes inherently create opportunities for administrative errors that jeopardize patients’ access to care. No exemption criteria can circumvent this problem and the serious risk to the coverage and health of the people we represent.

“The House legislation impacts all Medicaid eligibility groups and places an enormous administrative burden on state Medicaid programs at a time when they are already restarting redeterminations for the first time since 2020. By eliminating the federal match for individuals not in compliance, the legislation leaves no doubt that states would take away coverage from millions of individuals and result in significantly worsened health outcomes.

“Our organizations strongly oppose this bill due to the devastating impact it would have on health coverage and urge members to vote no on this and any other legislation that jeopardizes access to Medicaid.”

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American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
ALS Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Cancer Support Community
CancerCare
Chronic Disease Coalition
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research
Hemophilia Federation of America
Lupus Foundation of America
March of Dimes
Muscular Dystrophy Association

National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Eczema Association
National Health Council
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association`
Susan G. Komen
The AIDS Institute
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
WomenHeart