

February 24, 2026

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Congress Must Fund Health Care, Not Attacks on Immigrants and Communities

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, and Members of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned 135 health advocacy organizations and allied groups, we urge Congress to prioritize addressing the health care affordability crisis and protecting vital health care programs rather than funding weaponized immigration agencies wreaking havoc in our communities. At a time when health care costs are skyrocketing, Congress should be supporting communities by strengthening Medicaid, restoring and extending enhanced premium tax credits for Marketplace coverage, as well as ensuring access to preventive, sexual, and reproductive health care. Instead, by enacting H.R. 1 last summer, President Trump and his allies in Congress cut<sup>1</sup> Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Marketplace coverage by more than a trillion dollars, in order to dramatically expand<sup>2</sup> funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) violent mass deportation, detention, family separation, and anti-democracy efforts.

The health consequences of these decisions are neither speculative nor abstract. Already in 2026, more than a million people have lost access to care, and millions more who previously relied on the ACA enhanced premium tax credits are already paying an additional \$1,000 on average for

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<sup>1</sup> *By the numbers: Harmful Republican megabill will take health coverage away from millions of people and raise families' costs.* Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2025, August 27). <https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/by-the-numbers-harmful-republican-megabill-will-take-health-coverage-away-from>

<sup>2</sup> Chappell, B. (2026, January 21). *How ICE grew to be the highest-funded U.S. Law Enforcement Agency.* NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2026/01/21/nx-s1-5674887/ice-budget-funding-congress-trump>

premiums.<sup>3</sup> According to the Congressional Budget Office, the number of people without health insurance is estimated to increase by more than 14 million by 2034 as a result of H.R. 1's health insurance program cuts and the expiration of enhanced premium tax credits.<sup>4</sup> Scientists at Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania warned that the cuts will cause over 51,000 preventable deaths annually going forward.<sup>5</sup>

Leading<sup>6</sup> medical and public health experts<sup>7</sup> have also warned<sup>8</sup> that immigration enforcement policies that drive fear,<sup>9</sup> detention,<sup>10</sup> and family separation directly worsen health outcomes and deepen existing inequities. People, including toddlers and older adults, in detention face alarming barriers to health care services and prescriptions for health conditions, jeopardizing their health and lives.<sup>11</sup> Pregnant and postpartum people in immigration detention face delayed treatment,

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<sup>3</sup> Lukens, G., & Zhang, E. (2025, November 3). *Health insurance premium spikes imminent as tax credit enhancements set to expire*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/health-insurance-premium-spikes-imminent-as-tax-credit-enhancements-set-to-expire>

<sup>4</sup> Burns, A., Ortaliza, J., Lo, J., & Rae, M. (2025, August 20). *How will the 2025 reconciliation law affect the uninsured rate in each state?*. KFF. <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/how-will-the-2025-reconciliation-law-affect-the-uninsured-rate-in-each-state/>

<sup>5</sup> Robbins, J. (2025, June 25). *Yale scientists warn Medicaid cuts could cause 51,000 preventable deaths*. Yale Daily News. <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2025/06/26/yale-scientists-warn-medicaid-cuts-could-cause-51000-preventable-deaths/>

<sup>6</sup> Aizuss, D. H. (2026, January 26). *AMA statement on Immigration Enforcement at hospitals [Press Release]*. American Medical Association. <https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/ama-press-releases/ama-statement-immigration-enforcement-hospitals>

<sup>7</sup> *American Academy of Nursing response to federal enforcement tactics as a public health concern*. American Academy of Nursing. (2026, January 26). <https://aannet.org/news/718885/American-Academy-of-Nursing-Response-to-Federal-Enforcement-Tactics-as-a-Public-Health-Concern.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Choi, J. (2026, February 4). *Leading OB/GYN organization recommends clinicians protect immigrants*. The Hill. <https://thehill.com/newsletters/health-care/5723439-leading-ob-gyn-organization-recommends-clinicians-protect-immigrants/>

<sup>9</sup> Tusinski, D., & Cloteaux, S. (2026, January 28). *ICE agents shatter window, leave 1-month-old baby, mother in car after Portland arrest*. The Portland Press Herald. <https://www.pressherald.com/2026/01/28/ice-agents-shatter-window-leave-1-month-old-baby-mother-in-car-after-portland-arrest/?uuid=8322f2e4-2ac1-48fb-8e7c-0e0ac94b5378&lid=222199>

<sup>10</sup> *Immigration detention is harmful to health – alternatives to detention should be used*. World Health Organization. (2022, May 4). <https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/04-05-2022-immigration-detention-is-harmful-to-health---alternatives-to-detention-should-be-used>

<sup>11</sup> Hixenbaugh, M. (2026, February 7). *Toddler hospitalized with respiratory failure was returned to ICE detention and denied prescribed medication, lawsuit says*. NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/toddler-hospitalized-dilley-ice-detention-rcna257912>; Brief for Justice in Aging as Amicus Curiae in Support of Plaintiff at 1, *Rodriguez-Vasquez v. Bostock*, No. 25-6842 (9th Cir. Jan. 28, 2026), <https://justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2026-01-28-Dkt-42-1-FILED-Rodriguez-Vasquez-Amicus-Brief.pdf>.

inadequate medical care, and conditions fundamentally incompatible with safe pregnancy and recovery.<sup>12</sup> Obstetricians and gynecologists report that patients are delaying or forgoing prenatal and postnatal care, skipping cancer screenings and STI testing, and losing access to essential abortion, family planning, and pregnancy-related care out of fear of enforcement or loss of coverage.<sup>13</sup>

These harms are compounded by the elimination of long-standing “sensitive locations” protections.<sup>14</sup> By allowing ICE and CBP to conduct enforcement at or near health care facilities, schools, and other essential community spaces, the administration has transformed places of care and safety into sources of fear. Individuals are forced into impossible choices between their health and their safety. Providers are placed in untenable positions, unable to assure patients that seeking care will not expose them or their loved ones to detention or deportation. The predictable result is a chilling effect on care that endangers the public’s health and hurts families.

These outcomes are not incidental. As the wealthiest country in the world, we should not have a health care affordability crisis, health insurance coverage gaps, or a maternal mortality epidemic. Exacerbating these challenges by pouring tens of billions of dollars into ICE and CBP’s escalating attacks on both immigrant families and individuals exercising their constitutionally protected right to free speech is a political choice. Congress must swiftly act to address skyrocketing health care costs and protect access to health care for all. We call on Congress to:

- Repeal the immigration enforcement funding provisions of H.R. 1 and claw back funds appropriated to ICE and CBP at the expense of health care and basic needs programs.
- Reverse efforts that make it harder for people to access health care, including cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and ACA Marketplace coverage; and access to providers, such as Planned Parenthood and other providers of sexual and reproductive health care.
- Strengthen the above health care programs, including closing Medicaid coverage gaps and restoring and extending enhanced premium tax credits for Marketplace coverage.

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<sup>12</sup> Sainato, M. (2025, August 6). “Horrific”: report reveals abuse of pregnant women and children at US ICE facilities. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/aug/06/physical-sexual-abuse-pregnant-women-children-immigration-centers>

<sup>13</sup> Barclay, M. L., & Luthra, S. (2025, October 7). ICE fears put pregnant immigrants and their babies at risk. The 19th. <https://19thnews.org/2025/10/pregnant-immigrants-ice-fears-deportation/>

<sup>14</sup> Pearson, L. D. (2025, February 26). *Factsheet: Trump’s rescission of protected areas policies undermines safety for all*. National Immigration Law Center. <https://www.nilc.org/resources/factsheet-trumps-rescission-of-protected-areas-policies-undermines-safety-for-all/>

- Demand meaningful and enforceable measures to rein in ICE and CBP and require compliance with civil rights laws, medical standards of care, and due process as a condition of any further DHS funding.

At this moment, Congress faces a clear choice. It can continue misusing taxpayer dollars to fund attacks on immigrants and communities instead of funding health care—deepening health inequities, chilling health care access, and putting lives at risk—or it can act to restore and improve health care coverage and safety for individuals, families, and communities across the country. Health care access is a prerequisite for dignity, imperative for national security, and vital for freedom.

There is no justification for cutting care to fund cruelty. Congress must act now to fund health care, protect communities, and end policies that weaponize fear and undermine the health of our communities.

If we can provide any assistance on this matter, please contact Mia Villasenor, Senior Specialist, Legislative Affairs at Planned Parenthood Action Fund ([mia.villasenor@ppfa.org](mailto:mia.villasenor@ppfa.org)) and Madeline Morcelle, Senior Attorney at the National Health Law Program ([morcelle@healthlaw.org](mailto:morcelle@healthlaw.org)).

Sincerely,

**National Organizations**

Abortion Access Front  
Advocates for Youth  
AFT: Education, Healthcare, Public Services  
AIDS United  
All\* Above All  
Allies for Independence  
American Atheists  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
APRADE  
Autistic People of Color Fund  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network  
Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice  
BLKHLTH  
Caring Across Generations  
Castle Consulting  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
CenterLink  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
Community Catalyst  
Defend Public Health  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)  
Drug Policy Alliance

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)  
Feminist Majority  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Guttmacher Institute  
Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network  
Health Care for America Now  
HealthConnect One  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA- JPIC  
Ibis Reproductive Health  
ICAN! (Implementing Contraceptive Access Now)  
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice  
Indigenous Women Rising  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth  
Justice in Aging  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
Legal Action Center  
MomsRising  
NAACP  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Center for Youth Law  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Education Association  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Health Law Program  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice  
National Network of Abortion Funds  
National Network To End Domestic Violence  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Urban League  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Political Caucus  
NBJC  
People Power United  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Action Fund  
Positive Women's Network-USA  
Power to Decide  
PrEP4All  
Prevention Institute  
Pride At Work  
Progressive Vietnamese American Organization (PIVOT)

Protect Our Care  
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)  
Reproaction  
Reproductive Freedom for All  
Reproductive Health Access Project  
SEIU  
SiX Action  
Stop AAPI Hate  
TechTonic Justice  
UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
Voices for Progress  
Voices of Health Care Action  
WV Healthy Start/HAPI

### **California-Based Organizations**

Equality California  
Oasis Legal Services  
ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE  
Ahri Center  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California  
Atheists United  
California Association of Nurse Midwives  
California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Health Access California  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Maternal and Child Health Access  
Nevada County Citizens for Choice  
Pacific Asian Counseling Services  
Alliance for TransYouth Rights

### **Colorado-Based Organizations**

Alianza NORCO  
Colorado Center on Law and Policy  
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative  
Rocky Mountain Equality

### **Florida-Based Organizations**

Access Ready Inc.  
Florida Health Justice Project

### **Georgia-Based Organizations**

Serving at-risk families everywhere, Inc.  
SisterLove, Inc.

**Hawaii-Based Organizations**

Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!

**Illinois-Based Organizations**

Legal Council for Health Justice

**Maine-Based Organizations**

Maine Equal Justice

Maine Women's Lobby

**Maryland-Based Organizations**

Advance Maryland

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence

Public Justice Center

**Massachusetts-Based Organizations**

Health Law Advocates

Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice (also located in Rhode Island)

Massachusetts Physicians for National Health Care Program

Personal Disability Consulting, Inc.

**Michigan-Based Organizations**

Center for Civil Justice

The Lookout Project

**Minnesota-Based Organizations**

Our Justice

**Nebraska-Based Organizations**

Nebraska Appleseed

**New Jersey-Based Organizations**

WADEIn NJ

**New York-Based Organizations**

Safety Net Project at the Urban Justice Center

New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)

**North Carolina-Based Organizations**

North Carolina Justice Center

Disability Rights North Carolina

**Ohio-Based Organizations**

Abortion Forward

New Voices for Reproductive Justice (also located in Pennsylvania)

**Pennsylvania-Based Organizations**

New Voices for Reproductive Justice (also located in Ohio)

**Rhode Island-Based Organizations**

Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice (also located in Massachusetts)

**Tennessee-Based Organizations**

Tennessee Justice Center

SisterReach, Inc.

**Texas-Based Organizations**

Center for Civic and Public Policy Improvement

Every Texan

**Washington-Based Organizations**

Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA)

**Wisconsin-Based Organizations**

Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault