

January 20, 2025

The Honorable Roger Marshall

Russell Senate Office Building, #479A
Washington, DC 20002

The Honorable Jerry Moran

Dirksen Senate Office Building, #521
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sharice Davids

Rayburn House Office Building, #2435
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Estes

Rayburn House Office Building, #2234
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tracey Mann

Cannon House Office Building, #344
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Derek Schmidt

Longworth House Office Building, #1223
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sen. Marshall, Sen. Moran, Rep. Davids, Rep. Estes, Rep. Mann, and Rep. Schmidt:

On behalf of the undersigned Kansas organizations, we urge you to protect access to affordable health insurance for all Kansans. The next year will be critical in determining the future of health care in the United States and Kansas, and we urge you to take active steps to protect the health care of all of our residents and investments in public health.

Recent statements from the incoming Trump administration and Congress have indicated a desire to make significant changes and cuts to Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and other economic support programs. If changes are made to Medicaid or the ACA, it will make it harder for many Kansans to access health care, and make health care for everyone more expensive.

No one should have to choose between getting the health care they need and paying for rent, gas, or groceries. Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act remove barriers to accessing affordable health care and reduce the fear of catastrophic bills and medical debt.

When more people have access to affordable coverage, they are able to catch and treat health conditions and illnesses early instead of waiting to receive emergency care. This means a healthier Kansas workforce with less medical debt. It also means better treatment avenues for providers and lower uncompensated care for Kansas hospitals.

Medicaid provides health insurance for children and adults with low incomes, pregnant people, seniors, and Kansans with disabilities. It allows them to get the health care they need to get and stay healthy.

Medicaid plays an important role in supporting rural Kansans and their communities. The percentage of uninsured people is higher in rural areas and Medicaid is a reliable revenue source for hospitals in rural parts of the state, who face growing amounts of uncompensated

care. Without the support and protections in KanCare today, more rural Kansans will go without health insurance and rural hospitals will see higher uncompensated care costs. This, in turn, will have negative economic and cultural implications for the sustainability of rural communities across the state.

Medicaid is also the single largest payer for behavioral health services in the United States. With access to Medicaid, people are able to seek regular care for their conditions and are less likely to skip vital medications due to cost. Reducing or restructuring Medicaid could mean fewer Kansans accessing the health care they need.

The Affordable Care Act provides affordable private health insurance to Kansans who don't have access to or can't afford employer-based health insurance. More than 93% of Kansas enrollees in the marketplace are eligible for enhanced tax credits to lower their premium payments. Refusing to extend these enhanced tax credits means that nine out of every ten Kansans on the marketplace will have an increase in the costs to pay for their health care.

In Kansas we pride ourselves on working hard and caring for our neighbors. Taking away or reducing vital health care programs is not the Kansas way.

More than 400,000 Kansans currently rely on Medicaid coverage for health care and long-term care services. Approximately 171,000 Kansans are enrolled in coverage on the ACA Health Insurance Marketplace. A significant portion of our population depend on these programs for their health care needs.

For the past three years, the uninsured rate in Kansas has been higher than the national average. Reducing or taking away coverage provided by Medicaid or the ACA would take away access to health care for thousands of Kansans and result in skyrocketing uninsured rates, which are already too high.

We urge you as the Kansas delegation to protect the health care programs that Kansans need. In addition to being good for our residents, it is necessary for a healthy economy. When people are healthy they are more able to participate in the workforce and contribute to a robust economy. Likewise, hospitals and clinics contribute to the wellbeing of the community as well as the economy. We rely on you to represent our best interests in Washington, DC, and we ask that you use your voice to protect access to affordable health care and the benefits that it brings to the economy at every turn.

Sincerely,