



May 15, 2025

Dear Chairman Romanchuk, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston and Members of the Ohio Senate Medicaid Committee,

On behalf of Ohio Medicaid Matters, we're writing to ask for your leadership in protecting a program that is vital not only to the health and well-being of 3 million Ohioans but to the very economic stability of our state.

Ohio Medicaid Matters is a statewide coalition of more than 80 of Ohio's leading health and human services agencies, hospital systems and consumer advocates. We are committed to promoting Medicaid as a foundation of health and economic stability, recognizing that access to health care empowers Ohioans to work, contribute and drive economic growth.

Medicaid is not just a public program — it is the foundation of care and opportunity for our children, seniors, working adults and individuals living with disabilities or chronic health needs. In every corner of our state, it ensures access to primary and preventive care, behavioral health services, home- and community-based supports, and treatment for substance use disorders. It is Ohio's single largest health insurer, anchoring care delivery in all 88 of our counties and serving as a stabilizing force for our hospitals and providers, especially those in rural and underserved communities.

Medicaid also means jobs — not only by helping individuals regain their health and return to work, but by supporting the providers who staff rural hospitals that operate on razor-thin margins and rely heavily on Medicaid reimbursements.

Cuts being considered at the federal level are putting Ohioans, jobs and rural hospitals in jeopardy. But Ohio can mitigate some of this uncertainty. As you consider changes in the current legislative session, Ohio Medicaid Matters urges you to address and amend the trigger language currently in House Bill 96 that would terminate Ohio's Medicaid expansion should the federal match rate fall below 90%.

Such automatic termination would immediately threaten health coverage for **770,000 Ohioans**, including **362,000 residents of rural counties**. These drastic cuts have the potential to devastate a system that is working and that, over the past decade, has achieved measurable success.

Since Ohio expanded Medicaid coverage:

- **Uninsured rates have declined** significantly, particularly among working-age adults. In particular, the percentage of working-age Ohio adults (ages 19-64) with lower incomes who are uninsured dropped by 62% from 2012 to 2023. In addition, the percentage of Ohioans who went without care due to cost decreased 31%.
- **Community Health Centers have expanded patient capacity** in areas of the state where access to primary care is lacking, creating more jobs in urban and rural communities of need. This has also **reduced the cost of uncompensated care**, which is often offset by higher charges to patients with private health insurance.
- These same Community Health Centers have **delivered a 200% return on investment**, yielding \$2 for every \$1 invested and saving Medicaid an average of \$1,400 per adult patient each year compared to other providers.
- Access to care for individuals with mental health and substance use conditions also has expanded. In fact, in 2024, **40% of Ohioans enrolled in Medicaid expansion** had a primary mental health or substance use disorder diagnosis.
- And importantly, Ohioans covered by Medicaid expansion have found it **easier to work** (84%), **easier to care for family members** (58%, including 82% of parents) **and easier to access primary care rather than crowd emergency departments** (a 72% increase in non-emergency department usual sources of care).

The current trigger language undermines this progress and introduces instability into a system that families, providers and local governments rely upon. We urge you to revise the trigger provisions by replacing “shall” with “may,” ensuring that Ohio’s elected leaders can evaluate the real-world impact and protect the integrity of our health care system in our state.

In an era of rising behavioral health needs and continued economic recovery, now is not the time to weaken the safety net that holds families and communities together. Nor is it the time to cut critical health care jobs or threaten the future of health care services in areas that have finally begun to receive the attention they have so desperately needed.

Medicaid is a jobs program. It is an economic driver. And it is, above all, a promise that Ohio will care for its own — regardless of zip code, income or circumstance.

We respectfully ask that you lead with vision and pragmatism by supporting changes to the trigger language (drafted as amendment SC 1883) and rejecting proposals that would destabilize Medicaid funding, access and eligibility. Ohio’s expanded Medicaid program is working. Let’s not put Ohio — or Ohioans — at risk.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We welcome the opportunity to provide additional information or speak further as needed.

Sincerely,
Ohio Medicaid Matters Members:

- Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
- Access Center for Independent Living, Inc.
- Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.
- Advocates for Ohio's Future
- Alvis, Inc.
- American Heart Association
- Brain Injury Association of Ohio
- Breaking Silences Advisory Committee
- Caracole, Inc.
- COHHIO
- Disability Rights Ohio
- First Year Cleveland
- Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association
- Groundwork Ohio
- Health Impact Ohio
- Human Service Chamber of Franklin County
- Human Services Chamber of Hamilton County
- Hunger Network in Ohio
- Jewish Family Service of Cincinnati
- Lifecare Family Health and Dental Center
- Linking Employment Abilities & Potential (LEAP)
- Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition
- NAMI Greater Cleveland
- NAMI Ohio
- Neighborhood Family Practice
- Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition
- Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE)
- Northern Ohio Recovery Association (NORA)
- Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers
- Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans Education Fund
- Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Ohio Association of Community Health Centers
- Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities
- Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
- Ohio Association of Foodbanks
- Ohio Association of Health Plans
- Ohio Autism Insurance Coalition
- Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Ohio Chapter, American College of Emergency Physicians
- Ohio Children's Alliance
- Ohio Community Corrections Association
- Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage

- Ohio Hospital Association
- Ohio Olmstead Task Force
- Ohio Peer Recovery Organizations
- Ohio Poverty Law Center
- Ohio Provider Resource Association
- Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association
- Ohio Public Health Association
- Ohio School-Based Health Alliance
- Ohio State Medical Association
- Oral Health Ohio
- Philanthropy Ohio
- Policy Matters Ohio
- RISE Together Innovation Institute
- Signature Health, Inc.
- Sisters of Charity Health System
- Stella Maris
- Talbert House
- The Ability Center of Greater Toledo
- The Arc of Ohio
- The Center for Community Solutions
- The Center for Health Affairs & CHAMPS GPO
- The Coalition for Healthy Communities
- The Hunger Network in Ohio
- The MetroHealth System
- The Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition
- The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
- The Ohio Institute for Substance Use Disorder Excellence
- Thrive Peer Recovery Services
- UHCAN Ohio
- UC Health
- United Rehabilitation Services