



## DECODING THE POLITICIAN SPEAK ON MEDICAID (MEDI-CAL) CUTS

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Medicaid Cuts  
Cost Lives



California's Republican Congressmembers are using carefully-chosen words to give us the false impression they will protect Medicaid, but a close look at their language shows they're signaling ways to terminate health care for millions of Californians.

Here's what the GOP talking points on Medicaid (Medi-Cal) really mean - and why we can't take them at their word when lives are on the line.

### WHAT THEY SAY

*"Protect Medicaid for the most vulnerable."*

*Protect Medicaid for the "people it was intended for" including children, people with disabilities, and pregnant women.*

*"No able-bodied adult should be on Medicaid."*

### WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

*Terminate care for workers in low-wage jobs who became eligible for Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act.*

*Make millions of Californians reliant on emergency rooms for their health care and drive up costs for everyone.*

*A back-door ACA repeal like they tried - and failed - to do in 2017.*

### WHAT'S AT STAKE

5 million Californians losing their health care, living sicker, dying younger, and falling further into medical debt.

More people jamming emergency rooms to get basic care.

Californians at risk of losing care are those earning less than \$20k for one person or \$40k for a family of four,<sup>1</sup> who don't receive coverage from their employer and aren't paid enough to buy their own insurance.

Ripping health care away from hard-working Californians just trying to make a living for their families.

Terminating parents' coverage puts children's well-being at risk because families have to take money away from food, housing and other necessities to pay for parents' care.

Hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes losing billions of dollars - risking closures of ERs and other essential services or shuttering facilities altogether.

## WHAT THEY SAY

*Implement “common sense” work requirements on “able-bodied adults.”*

## WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

*Make Medi-Cal enrollees jump through complicated hoops and new paperwork requirements to prove they are working or unable to work; the real goal is to make the hurdles so complex, people are terminated from care whether or not they are working.*

*Punish people who need Medicaid between jobs with a new “job loss penalty.”*

## WHAT’S AT STAKE

Jeopardizing health care for 8 million Californians - the vast majority of whom are already working, have a disability that keeps them out of the workforce, or are caring for a family member.<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT THEY SAY

*“Root out waste, fraud, and abuse” in healthcare.*

## WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

*Cut deeply into health care for everyday people, while leaving untouched the true, wasteful costs health care corporations impose on taxpayers.*

*Ignores the fact that “nobody gets a Medicaid check in the mail, and there are already processes in place to go after bad actors like fake labs or unscrupulous providers filing false Medicaid claims... proposals to cut fraud would fund more prosecutors and investigators to ferret out criminal activity but that is not what Congress is doing — these are just proposals to cut Medicaid.”<sup>3</sup>*

## WHAT’S AT STAKE

Proposed cuts represent almost 1/3 of Medicaid funding. No one credibly believes that target could be met without terminating care for millions of seniors in nursing homes, children, parents, veterans, caregivers, people with cancer or disabilities.

## WHAT THEY SAY

*“Nobody would be kicked off Medicaid” as long as “governors fund the program.”<sup>4</sup>*

## WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

*Reduce the proportion of funding the federal government provides to states that expanded coverage to low-wage workers under the Affordable Care Act. This move is aimed at allowing Congressmembers to say they didn’t terminate anyone’s care, while likely forcing states to do so. A classic “bait and switch.”*

## WHAT’S AT STAKE

5 million Californians losing their health care, getting sicker until they are forced to go to the emergency room.

Californians at risk of losing care are those earning less than \$20k for one person or \$40k for a family of four,<sup>5</sup> who don’t receive coverage from their employer and aren’t paid enough to buy their own insurance.

Terminating parents’ coverage puts children’s well-being at risk because families have to take money away from food, housing and other necessities to pay for parents’ care.

Hospitals and clinics losing billions of dollars - at risk of closing ERs and other essential services.

## WHAT THEY SAY

*Eliminate the provider tax “loophole”.*

## WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

*Prevent states from raising revenues that are matched by the federal Medicaid program, amounting to a cut of \$612 billion<sup>6</sup> in Medicaid funding from states over the next decade.*

## WHAT’S AT STAKE

A cut this deep to CA’s Medi-Cal program is just another way to terminate care for millions of people and families and/or eliminating vital services from coverage.

<sup>1</sup> [chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/MediCalFactsFiguresAlmanac08052024.pdf](https://chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/MediCalFactsFiguresAlmanac08052024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [laborcenter.berkeley.edu/eight-million-medi-cal-enrollees-at-risk-of-losing-health-coverage-if-congress-imposes-work-requirements/](https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/eight-million-medi-cal-enrollees-at-risk-of-losing-health-coverage-if-congress-imposes-work-requirements/)

<sup>3</sup> [cbsnews.com/news/medicaid-cuts-house-republicans-energy-commerce-committee/](https://cbsnews.com/news/medicaid-cuts-house-republicans-energy-commerce-committee/)

<sup>4</sup> [nbcnews.com/politics/congress/republicans-consider-unraveling-key-part-obamacare-trump-agenda-bill-rcna203418](https://nbcnews.com/politics/congress/republicans-consider-unraveling-key-part-obamacare-trump-agenda-bill-rcna203418)

<sup>5</sup> [chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/MediCalFactsFiguresAlmanac08052024.pdf](https://chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/MediCalFactsFiguresAlmanac08052024.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [politico.com/news/2025/02/27/republicans-medicare-plan-00206540](https://politico.com/news/2025/02/27/republicans-medicare-plan-00206540)