

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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## **Rep. Kuster calls for action to Lower Costs and Improve Health Care for Granite Staters**

***Rep. Kuster and Health Care Advocates Join Protect Our Care on the Nationwide “Lower Costs, Better Care” Bus Tour to Demonstrate the Urgent Need to Lower Prescription Drug Costs for all Granite Staters***



**Concord, NH** - This morning, Protect Our Care’s “Care Force One” arrived in Concord to demonstrate the need for lowering Granite Staters health costs, expanding coverage, and reducing racial disparities in care. Headlined by the event highlighted how Democrats are leading the charge to advance American health care and held Republicans accountable for continuing to reject measures to improve care and lower costs for New Hampshire Residents.

**Read Protect Our Care’s new report: Lower Costs, Better Care for Granite Staters [here](#).**

Throughout the nationwide [“Lower Cost, Better Care”](#) bus tour, Protect Our Care is fighting to ensure critical health care measures supported by President Biden remain in upcoming budget

reconciliation legislation. These priorities include giving Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices for all Americans, getting more Americans covered by closing the Medicaid gap, expanding Medicare benefits to include hearing, dental, and vision, and further reducing health care premiums for millions of Americans who purchase coverage on their own.

**You Can Watch the Event [Here](#).**

"Throughout my time in Congress, I have been proud to advocate for and defend the Affordable Care Act," said **Rep. Annie Kuster (D-NH-2)**. "The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how critical it is to reduce health care costs and expand access to coverage. That's why I was proud to vote for the historic American Rescue Plan which takes steps to bolster our nation's health care system and ensure nearly everyone who buys their own individual or family health insurance through the Marketplace can receive a tax credit to reduce their premiums. I look forward to bringing the stories of Granite Staters shared today back to Washington, and will continue my efforts to bring lawmakers on both sides of the aisle together to improve lives."

"We all need to prioritize the diversity, equity and inclusion in our country," said **Sandra Pratt, M.Ed.** "Everyone has a great skill to contribute to our Country's economy, health, education, housing, etc."

"Medicare helps New Hampshire's most vulnerable population afford medications. It is designed to help people with different abilities and older adults. Government's ability to negotiate prices with big pharma will help save billions of tax-payer dollars and has the potential to impact every Medicare beneficiary," said **Jay Gupta, the Director of Pharmacy and Integrative Health of Harbor Care in Nashua**. "Some of the immediate benefits could be lower insurance premiums, lower deductibles and most importantly, no donut hole also known as the coverage gap. Veterans Affairs negotiates drug prices. Medicaid has a Mandatory Drug Rebate Program in place. But Medicare doesn't have any safeguard from price gouging by pharmaceutical and insurance companies. Drugs have to be affordable, particularly lifesaving drugs. If we can't afford a lifesaving drug, it's not going to save our lives."

"In recent years, I have been unable to fill prescriptions that could improve my quality of life, due to astronomical costs. Several of the medications that my doctors have prescribed would have cost \$500 or more per month, which isn't sustainable for me, as my monthly health care costs are already high," said **Leah Stagnone**, a local community organizer. "Other potential treatments that could help to reverse my painful nerve damage are off the table because they would cost thousands, even with insurance. Due to my health, I'm only able to work part-time, although with adequate access to care, I am hopeful that my wellness could improve to a degree that working full-time becomes possible. In the meantime, short-sighted elected officials who threaten to cut federal funding and programs for healthcare often leave me worried about my future access to affordable health insurance."

"New Hampshire should be leading in New England in the percentage of fully vaccinated people, public health funding and health outcomes but we rank last. Why?" asked **Arnie Arnesen**. "Leaders matter especially when confronted with a pandemic, we are the weak link in New England."

"When I was fighting stage 4 cancer, I had to forgo medication that would boost my immune system because the price tag was simply too high," said **Laura Packard**. "I wound up in the hospital, and nearly died. Sadly, stories like these are all too common in our country. Patients should be able to focus on getting well, not struggling to pay for medications. That's why we need Congress to act now to lower the cost of prescription drugs, including allowing Medicare to negotiate prices on behalf of all Americans."

"Granite Staters have the right to know whether their elected officials stand by President Biden's agenda to improve health care for millions or if they side with Big Pharma and other special interests," said **Protect Our Care New Hampshire State Director Jayme Simoes**. When Congress returns this fall, we have a once in a generation opportunity to transform health care for the American people, including lowering prescription drug prices, closing the Medicaid coverage gap, and further reducing health costs for people purchasing coverage on their own. Care Force One is crisscrossing the country this summer making the case for getting this critical job done."

Tomorrow, "Care Force One" will head to New Jersey. For more information, please visit [protectourcare.org/bus-tour/](https://protectourcare.org/bus-tour/).

### **The Protect Our Care "Lower Costs, Better Care" Bus Tour is making stops in:**

**Bangor, Maine** on Monday, August 9, 2021  
**Portland, Maine** on Monday, August 9, 2021  
**Burlington, Vermont** on Tuesday, August 10, 2021  
**Concord, New Hampshire** on Wednesday, August 11, 2021  
**Teaneck, New Jersey** on Friday, August 13, 2021  
**Bethlehem, Pennsylvania** on Thursday, August 12, 2021  
**New York, New York** on Friday, August 13, 2021  
**New Brunswick, New Jersey** on Monday, August 16, 2021  
**Scranton, Pennsylvania** on Monday, August 16, 2021  
**Burlington County, New Jersey** on Tuesday, August 17, 2021  
**Wilmington, Delaware** on Tuesday, August 17, 2021  
**Dover, Delaware** on Tuesday, August 17, 2021  
**Morgantown, West Virginia** on Wednesday, August 18, 2021  
**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania** on Wednesday, August 18, 2021  
**Youngstown, Ohio** on Thursday, August 19, 2021  
**Columbus, Ohio** on Thursday, August 19, 2021  
**Milwaukee, Wisconsin** on Friday, August 20, 2021  
**Madison, Wisconsin** on Friday, August 20, 2021

**Parkersburg, West Virginia** on Monday, August 23, 2021  
**Charleston, West Virginia** on Monday, August 23, 2021  
**Raleigh, North Carolina** on Tuesday, August 24, 2021  
**Charlotte, North Carolina** on Tuesday, August 24, 2021  
**Columbia, South Carolina** on Tuesday, August 24, 2021  
**Atlanta, Georgia** on Wednesday, August 25, 2021  
**Savannah, Georgia** on Wednesday, August 25, 2021  
**Orlando, Florida** on Thursday, August 26, 2021  
**Tampa, Florida** on Thursday, August 26, 2021  
**Denver, Colorado** on Monday, August 30, 2021  
**Flagstaff, Arizona** on Tuesday, August 31, 2021  
**Phoenix, Arizona** on Tuesday, August 31, 2021  
**Tucson, Arizona** on Wednesday, September 1, 2021  
**San Diego, California** on Thursday, September 2, 2021  
**Anaheim, California** on Thursday, September 2, 2021  
**Las Vegas, Nevada** on Friday, September 3, 2021