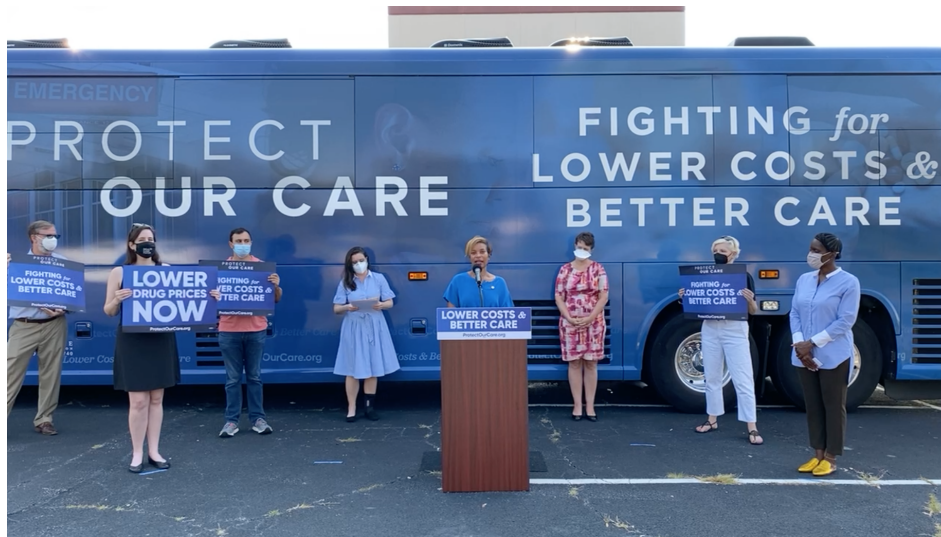


State Rep. Rebecca Mitchell, Sen. Sonya Halpern & Health Care Advocates Join Protect Our Care on the Nationwide “Lower Costs, Better Care” Bus Tour to Demonstrate the Urgent Need to Close the Medicaid Gap



Atlanta — This morning, Protect Our Care’s “Care Force One” arrived in Atlanta to demonstrate the need to lower Georgian’s health costs, expand coverage, and reduce racial disparities in care. Headlined by **State Representative Rebecca Mitchell** and **Senator Sonya Halpern**, 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 Georgians.

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

“We have seen uninsured Georgia adults, parents, and workers left disappointed again and again over their inability to meaningfully participate in the health care system”, **said Knetta Adkins, Organizing Director for Georgians for a Healthy Future**, “Despite tremendous federal incentives offered to Georgia and the other holdout states in the

American Rescue Plan and contrary to broad support among voters, state leaders continue to block access to affordable health coverage for hundreds of thousands of Georgians. Health care is critically important to the health of Georgia's families, communities, and economy. We believe we should work together to expand access to health care for all Georgians, especially those who can least afford it."

"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, national healthcare advocate**, "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."

"We are standing here in Georgia where our hospitals are so overwhelmed that our state has had to fund 2,800 additional medical staff, and 100 national guard members were sent just yesterday, to help hospitals deal with the overwhelming numbers of people coming in", **said State Representative Rebecca Mitchell**, "Yes, we do have a current healthcare crisis, but we have had a longstanding healthcare crisis in Georgia, partially brought on by the policies we chose to not implement here; namely Medicaid Expansion. I'm so proud to be a Georgian that sent two Senators up to Congress to champion Medicaid Expansion. I sincerely hope that when we are standing here next year that we will be in a different place, where everyone has better access to healthcare."

"For over a decade, federal funds for Medicaid expansion have been available and Georgia's Republican leaders have refused them -- sacrificing the health of thousands in this state", **said State Senator Sonya Halpern**, "I'm so proud that Senators Warnock, Ossoff and the rest of the Georgia Congressional delegation, have been leaders in the fight to lower drug and premium costs, expand coverage, strengthen benefits for seniors and reduce racial disparities in care. We have a once in a generation opportunity to transform health care for the American people, and Senators Warnock and Ossoff and their Democratic colleagues are working tirelessly to ensure measures to lower costs and expand care become law this fall. "

"Expanding and improving American health care has never been more critical, **said Protect Our Care Georgia State Director Liz Ernst**. "President Biden and Democrats in Congress are leading the charge to lower health care costs and expand coverage by fighting for lower prescription drug prices, getting more Americans covered by closing the Medicaid gap, and further reducing health care premiums for millions of Americans. It's imperative that Congress enact these provisions this fall to give Americans much-needed relief -- it's not only smart policy but it's the right thing to do."

Later today, "Care Force One" will head to Savannah, where Protect Our Care will be joined virtually by Mayor Van Johnson and Representative Derek Mallow. For more information, please visit 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 Thursday, August 12, 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