

Lower Costs, Better Care for North Carolinians

There is an urgent need to lower health costs, expand coverage, and reduce racial health disparities across North Carolina. That is why it is essential to ensure critical health care measures supported by President Biden remain in upcoming budget reconciliation legislation, specifically empowering Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices for all Americans, creating a federal solution to close the Medicaid coverage gap, expanding Medicare benefits to include dental, vision, and hearing, and making the premium reductions included in the American Rescue Plan permanent, so North Carolinians can continue to access low-cost coverage.

Americans support bold action to lower health costs and curb soaring drug prices, with [88 percent](#) in favor of allowing Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical corporations to lower prices. President Biden is committed to tackling these issues head on, demonstrated by his commitment to expanding health coverage through [enhanced subsidies](#), closing the [Medicaid coverage gap](#), and [support](#) for Medicare drug price negotiation.

North Carolinians depend on affordable health care, expanded access to coverage, and drug pricing reform to live healthy lives. Empowering the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices would save Americans more than [\\$150 billion](#) at the pharmacy counter and create an additional [\\$500 billion](#) in savings for the federal government that could be reinvested to [reduce premiums](#), [expand Medicare benefits](#) to include dental, vision, and hearing, and close the Medicaid coverage gap in the 12 states that have [refused to accept expansion](#). We must act now.

The American Rescue Plan Has Helped 535,803 North Carolinians Access Affordable Care

- **Strong Marketplace Enrollment.** Nearly [540,000](#) North Carolinians residents have signed up for coverage through the Marketplace in 2021.
- **Increasing Health Coverage Access For Thousands of North Carolinians.** The American Rescue Plan has [reduced or eliminated](#) Marketplace premiums for thousands in North Carolina. Under the plan, [116,5000](#) uninsured North Carolinians are newly eligible for health coverage tax credits and 112,600 individuals have access to coverage with zero dollar premiums.
- **Meaningful Savings On Premiums.** Premium savings under the American Rescue Plan benefit all Americans. For example, a 60-year-old couple with an annual income of \$75,000 will see their monthly premiums drop from \$2,192, to just \$531, saving more than [\\$1,661](#) each month.
- **Improving Maternal Health Access.** For new mothers, the American Rescue Plan has created a pathway to coverage, providing states the opportunity to extend [postpartum coverage](#) under Medicaid from 60 days to 12 months following birth. North Carolina currently has legislation [pending](#) to seek federal approval to expand coverage.

Lowering Prescription Drug Costs

- **Drug Price Hikes Are Outpacing Inflation.** In 2019, American prescription drug spending soared to [\\$369.7 billion](#), an increase of 5.7 percent, more than [three times](#) the inflation rate for the same period.
- **One Quarter Of Americans Struggle To Access Essential Medications.** [Nearly one in four](#) Americans taking prescription drugs struggles to afford needed medications, with 29 percent reporting not taking medications as instructed within the past year due to cost.
- **Drug Price Negotiation Would Save Billions.** The single most effective measure to bring down drug costs is to empower Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices. Negotiation would save patients more than [\\$150 billion](#) and create [\\$500 billion](#) in savings for the federal government.
- **Reinvestment Of Savings.** When the federal government saves on drug costs, those funds become available to [reduce premiums](#), [expand Medicare benefits](#) to include dental, vision, and hearing, and close the [Medicaid coverage gap](#) in the 12 states that have [refused to accept expansion](#).
- **Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Is Overwhelming Popular.** [Nearly nine in ten](#) Americans support empowering Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices.

Drug Prices In North Carolina

- In 2019, North Carolinians spent [nearly \\$280 million](#) in cash on prescription drugs.
- A 2019 survey found that [75 percent](#) of North Carolinians think it is “very important” or “extremely important” for Congress and the president to address the high cost of prescription drugs.
- According to research from West Health, in the last year [26 percent](#) of voters in North Carolina reported that they or someone in their household couldn’t pay for a medication that their doctor prescribed.
- [Over 2.5 million](#) North Carolinians have chronic conditions like cancer, diabetes, and asthma that require prescription drugs for treatment and management.
- The average annual cost of prescription drugs in North Carolina increased [57.8 percent](#) between 2012 and 2017, while average annual income only increased 11.1 percent in the state.

Medicaid Expansion And Closing The Coverage Gap

- **591,000 North Carolinians Could Gain Coverage If The State Expanded Medicaid.** The Urban Institute estimated that [591,000](#) North Carolinians would enroll in Medicaid if the state adopted expansion, including over [200,000](#) people caught in the coverage gap. [Half](#) of North Carolinians who stand to gain coverage are people of color.
- **Medicaid Expansion Would Create Jobs In North Carolina.** Medicaid expansion has been [associated](#) with boosting state economies and creating jobs. Researchers from George Washington University found that Medicaid expansion would create [nearly 40,000](#) jobs and increase business activity by nearly [\\$12 billion](#) in North Carolina.
- **Medicaid Expansion Saves Lives.** Between 2014 and 2017, North Carolina's rejection of Medicaid expansion cost an estimated [1,400](#) lives among older adults aged 55 to 64. At the same time, states that expanded Medicaid saved 19,000 lives.

Expanding Coverage

- **Millions Nationwide Would Gain Stable Coverage.** [4.2 million](#) uninsured people would gain coverage if the American Rescue Plan's subsidies are made permanent, and millions more would continue to save on health care costs.
- **Permanent Health Coverage Subsidies Would Benefit Older North Carolinians.** Nearly 540,000 North Carolinians selected a plan on the Marketplace in 2021, with older adults between [55 and 64](#) making up more than a quarter of enrollees. The American Rescue Plan offers [significant relief](#) for older individuals, including those at 400 percent of the federal poverty level.

Expanding Medicare Benefits

- **More than 1,200,000 North Carolinians Would Benefit From Expanded Coverage.** Nearly [38 million](#) traditional Medicare enrollees would gain dental, vision, and hearing coverage if Medicare benefits were expanded. Due to lack of coverage, [nearly half](#) of Medicare beneficiaries did not seek dental care in the past year.
- **Medicare Beneficiaries Are 19 Percent Of North Carolina's Residents.** In 2018, [nearly one in five](#) North Carolinians were Medicare beneficiaries. Recent reports have found between [47](#) and [64](#) percent of Medicare beneficiaries do not have dental coverage, [74 percent](#) lack vision coverage, and [76 percent](#) go without hearing coverage.
- **Income And Racial Inequity Increase Health Disparities.** Half of all Medicare beneficiaries live on annual incomes below [\\$29,650](#), pushing dental, vision, and hearing coverage out of reach. For [beneficiaries of color](#) or those living in [rural](#) areas, accessing these essential benefits has become increasingly challenging.

Governor Roy Cooper Is Standing Up For North Carolinians' Care

Governor Cooper Supports Expanding Medicaid In North Carolina, Increasing Access For Thousands Of Families. Governor Cooper's 2021-2023 budget sets aside [\\$5 billion](#) for

Medicaid expansion. The American Rescue Plan would provide North Carolina with an additional \$1.7 billion in federal funding to support the state's Medicaid expansion for up to six years. "We must get health care to more working people and the best way to do that is to expand Medicaid," [said](#) Governor Cooper. "I am ready to work with legislative leadership and members of both political parties here in North Carolina to find a way forward."

Representative Alma Adams Is Fighting For North Carolinians' Care

Representative Adams Voted For Historic Legislation To Lower Prescription Drug Prices. Representative Adams voted for the 2019 Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act ([H.R. 3](#)), historic legislation to drastically reduce Americans' prescription drug prices by up to 55 percent and save taxpayers nearly \$500 billion over the next 10 years. H.R. 3 included the most comprehensive drug pricing reform in American history and the largest expansion to Medicare's benefits in decades.

Representative Adams Supported Providing Relief For North Carolina Families With The American Rescue Plan. Adams [voted for](#) the American Rescue Plan, which includes measures to expand coverage and to dramatically lower health care costs for thousands of families across North Carolina. In addition to providing critical pandemic relief, the ARP lowers premiums for people purchasing coverage through the marketplaces and expands access to financial assistance for more middle-class families. Adams praised the law, saying "The American Rescue Plan Act will crush the virus, return children safely to the classroom, get vaccines to the people, put dollars into families' pockets, and put people back to work...The American people can't wait, and that's why I voted yes."

Senator Richard Burr Is Part Of The Problem

Burr Opposed The American Rescue Plan And Relief For North Carolinians

Senator Burr Voted Against The American Rescue Plan And Relief For Thousands Of North Carolina Families. Alongside all of his Republican colleagues, Richard Burr [voted against](#) the American Rescue Plan, historic legislation that includes measures to expand coverage and to dramatically lower health care costs for thousands of North Carolina families. In addition to providing critical pandemic relief, the ARP lowers premiums for people purchasing coverage through the marketplaces and expands access to financial assistance for more middle-class families.

Burr Has Received Over One Million Dollars In Pharmaceutical Contributions

Senator Burr Has Received Over \$1,000,000 In Contributions From Pharmaceutical Companies And Executives. Over the course of his career, Richard Burr has received \$1,605,252 in [contributions](#) from pharmaceutical PACs and executives. During his 2016 reelection campaign, [more than \\$540,000](#) in contributions poured in from the pharmaceutical industry.