

## **Lower Costs, Better Care for Ohioans**

There is an urgent need to lower health costs, expand coverage, and reduce racial health disparities across Ohio. 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 Ohioans 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.

Ohioans 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 201,069 Ohioans Access Affordable Care**

- **Strong Marketplace Enrollment.** More than [200,000](#) Ohio residents have signed up for coverage through the Marketplace in 2021.
- **Increasing Health Coverage Access For Thousands of Ohioans.** The American Rescue Plan has [reduced or eliminated](#) Marketplace premiums for thousands in Ohio. Under the plan, [93,200](#) uninsured Ohioans are newly eligible for health coverage tax credits and 23,100 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 \$1,593, to just \$531, saving more than [\\$1,062](#) 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.

### **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 Overwhelmingly Popular.** [Nearly nine in ten](#) Americans support empowering Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices.

#### **Drug Prices In Ohio**

- In 2019, Ohioans spent [nearly \\$200 million](#) in cash on prescription drugs.
- In 2018, [a third](#) of Ohio residents reported that they did not fill a prescription due to cost. Polling has shown that [87 percent](#) of Ohioans are concerned about the cost of prescription drugs.
- In 2017, pharmaceutical companies spent nearly [\\$60 million](#) to defeat an Ohio ballot initiative to require the state to pay the same or lower for prescription drugs as the US Department of Veterans Affairs.
- [Millions](#) of Ohioans have chronic conditions like cancer, diabetes, asthma, and COPD that require prescription drugs for treatment and management.
- Ohioans overwhelmingly support allowing Medicare to negotiate better drug prices. According to a 2018 West Health poll, [86 percent](#) of Ohioans support allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices.

#### **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 Ohioans.** Over [200,000](#) Ohioans selected a plan on the Marketplace in 2021, with older adults between [55 and 64](#) making up more than a third 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 1.3 Million Ohioans 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 20 Percent Of Ohio's Residents.** In 2018, [one in five](#) Ohioans 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.

### **Senator Sherrod Brown Is Standing Up For Ohioans' Care**

**Senator Brown Was An Enthusiastic Supporter Of The American Rescue Plan, Providing Relief For Thousands Of Ohio Families.** Brown [voted for](#) the American Rescue Plan, historic legislation that includes measures to expand coverage and to dramatically lower health care costs for thousands of Ohio 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. Brown [praised the law](#), saying that it will “help us deliver on the hope that Americans voted for. Democrats promised shots in arms, money in families’ pockets, children in schools, workers in jobs, and a roof over families’ heads.”

**Senator Brown Supports Efforts To Allow Medicare To Negotiate Drug Prices.** Sen. Brown is a [cosponsor](#) of the Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act, legislation which would allow for Medicare to negotiate the best possible price of prescription drugs to cut costs.

### **Representative Tim Ryan Is Standing Up For Ohioans' Care**

**Representative Ryan Introduced Legislation To Support Mental Health And Addiction During The Pandemic.** Ryan introduced the Coronavirus Mental Health and Addiction Assistance Act of 2021 ([H.R. 593](#)), to expand mental health and addiction services with a \$100 million authorization to initiate or expand qualifying programs in response to Covid-19.

### **Representative Ryan Voted For Historic Legislation To Lower Prescription Drug Prices.**

Ryan 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.

### **Senator Rob Portman Is Part Of The Problem**

Portman Opposed The American Rescue Plan And Relief For Tens Of Thousand Of Ohioans

**Senator Portman Voted Against The American Rescue Plan And Relief For Thousands Of Ohio Families.** Alongside all of his Republican colleagues, Rob Portman [voted against](#) the American Rescue Plan, historic legislation that includes measures to expand coverage and to dramatically lower health care costs for thousands of Ohio 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.

Portman Has Received Hundreds Of Thousands Of Dollars In Pharmaceutical Contributions

**Senator Portman Has Received Nearly \$1 Million In Contributions From Pharmaceutical Companies And Executives.** Over the course of his career, Rob Portman has received \$996,725 in [contributions](#) from pharmaceutical PACs and executives. During his 2020 reelection campaign, more than [\\$384,000](#) in contributions poured in from the pharmaceutical industry.