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Democratic Leaders and Advocates Call for Congress to Lower Costs and Improve Health Care for North Carolinians

State Senators, Community Leaders, and Health Care Advocates Join Protect Our Care on the Nationwide “Lower Costs, Better Care” Bus Tour to Demonstrate the Urgent Need to Lower Health Care Costs and Cover Those in the Medicaid Coverage Gap



Raleigh, NC - This morning, Protect Our Care’s “Care Force One” arrived in Raleigh, North Carolina to demonstrate the need for lowering North Carolinians’ health costs, expanding coverage, and reducing racial disparities in care. Headlined by State Senator Natalie Murdock, State Senator Jay Chaudhuri, North Carolina Democratic Party Chair Dr. Bobbie Richardson, NC AFL-CIO President MaryBe McMillan, and Raleigh-Apex NAACP President Gerald Givens Jr., 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 North Carolinians.

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

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.](#)

“Especially as we continue to face the COVID-19 pandemic, no North Carolinian should have to worry about medical debt or going without needed care,” **said State Senator Jay Chuahduri**. “Providing health care for working families, older adults, and people with disabilities by closing the Medicaid coverage gap would mean that more than 2 million uninsured people nationwide would get access to quality insurance at little or no cost. It’s the right thing to do and it’s common sense policy.”

“It is well documented that Black people are disproportionately harmed by income and health coverage inequity,” **said Raleigh-Apex NAACP President Gerald Givens Jr.** “Closing the Medicaid coverage gap is the single most important step we can take right now to reduce racial disparities in health care. People of color make up 60 percent of the people that could gain coverage in non-expansion states, including right here in North Carolina.”

“When I was fighting stage 4 cancer, I had to forego medication that would boost my immune system because the price tag was simply too high. I wound up in the hospital, and nearly died. Sadly, stories like these are all too common in our country,” **said Laura Packard**. 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.”

“The average household is one medical emergency away from being launched into bankruptcy. As a small business owner, there were times I went without health care myself, choosing to make payroll instead. I often went without medication I needed for my pre-existing conditions,” **said State Senator Natalie Murdock**. “I am not the exception. Millions of North Carolinians deal with this every single day. We have an opportunity now to expand health care and lower costs for North Carolinians. Let’s get it done this year.”

“While Republicans have spent the better part of the last decade trying to roll back, weaken, and eliminate health care, Democrats believe that health care is a right – not a privilege – and that every single American should have access to quality, affordable care,” **said North Carolina Democratic Party Chair Dr. Bobbie Richardson**. “Thanks to President Biden, we are building upon the success of the Affordable Care Act and enacting the largest expansion of health care coverage since its passage through the American Rescue Plan, which is a remarkable feat after years of Republican obstruction and political games. We must stay the course.”

Later today, “Care Force One” will head to Charlotte, North Carolina where Protect Our Care will be joined by City Councilman Malcolm Graham, community organizations, and health care advocates. 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