

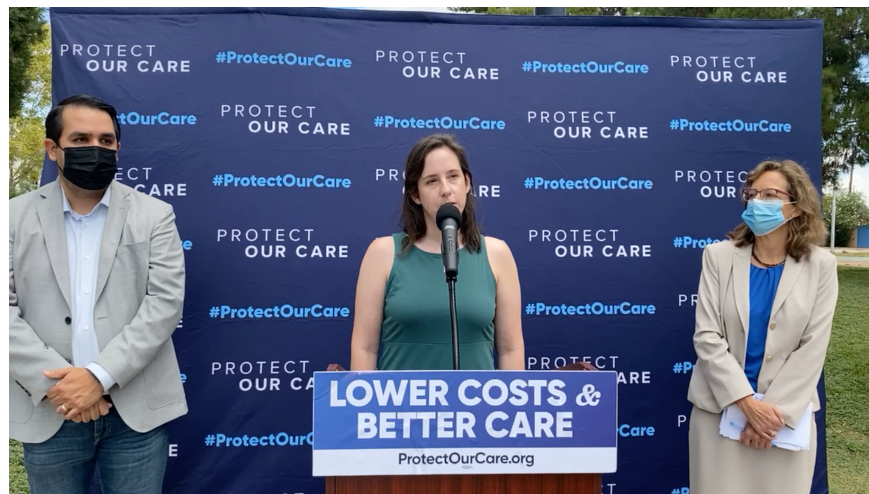
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **State Senator Kirsten Engel Calls to Lower Costs and Improve Health Care for Arizonans**

***State Senator Kirsten Engel and Health Care Advocates Join Protect Our Care on the Nationwide “Lower Costs, Better Care” Tour to Demonstrate the Urgent Need to Lower the Cost of Prescription Drugs***



**[Tucson, AZ]** - This morning, Protect Our Care’s “Care Force One” arrived in Tucson to demonstrate the need for lowering Arizonans’ health costs, expanding coverage, and reducing racial disparities in care. Headlined by State Senator Kirsten Engel, 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 Arizonans.

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

Throughout the nationwide [“Lower Cost, Better Care”](#) 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](#).**

"This tour is giving Americans from all walks of life the opportunity to speak out about the pressing need to lower health care costs and improve care," said State Director for Arizona Protect Our Care, Morgan Tucker. "Arizonans 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. 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."

"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," said cancer survivor and health care advocate 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."

"Without medicare being able to negotiate, we are back before we even had anything because now there is no safeguard," said Kitty Kennedy of the Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans. "We need medicare negotiation of prescription drugs. Medicare is not free and we really need to make it more affordable."

"Now is the time to act," said State Senator Kirsten Engel. "Americans pay more for prescription drugs than anywhere in the world. It is unacceptable that millions of Americans cannot afford their medications. Healthcare must be a right and not a privilege."

Tomorrow, "Care Force One" will head to San Diego, CA, where Protect Our Care will be joined by leaders and advocates. 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 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