



PROTECT
OUR CARE

New Report

**Republicans Must Act to
Protect Medicaid Coverage for
Millions in the Asian American,
Native Hawaiian, and Pacific
Islander Community**

During this Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month, Congressional Republicans are advancing a spending bill that will raise costs and rip away people's health care so they can fund tax cuts for billionaires and big corporations. Medicaid is the largest health insurance program in the country, providing health care for over [70 million](#) Americans, including [4.5 million](#) AANHPIs. Generations of structural racism across all determinants of health have resulted in lower rates of health coverage and worse health outcomes amongst people of color. As a result, AANHPI communities suffer from [higher rates](#) of liver and stomach cancer, hepatitis B-related mortality, and increased incidence of tuberculosis, which makes access to affordable health coverage through Medicaid even more essential.

The Republican plan would shutter community health clinics and rural hospitals, jeopardize the health care of half of all children in America, and raise costs for hardworking families. Every single community across the country will feel the devastating effects of these cuts. For people of color, the loss of coverage would be catastrophic, taking away access to essential care and exacerbating health inequities.

[Poll](#) after [poll](#) after [poll](#) after [poll](#) have found the majority of Americans from all corners of our nation oppose any cuts to Medicaid or the Affordable Care Act. Yet, the Republican spending bill will give tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans at the expense of the medical care and financial stability of everyone else. In addition to draconian Medicaid cuts, Republicans [are raising](#) premiums and out-of-pocket costs for tens of millions of people who buy coverage on their own. They are fundamentally dismantling the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by raising costs for millions, making it harder to enroll, and chipping away at its core provisions. As a result, millions of middle-class families could lose their coverage altogether.

By The Numbers:

- **[18 Percent](#) Of Asian Americans Are Enrolled In Medicaid.** Roughly [6.6 percent](#) of the American population identifies as Asian American, equating to about 25 million people.
- **[35 Percent](#) Of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) Are Covered By Medicaid.** That's about 357,116 out of [1,020,332](#) NHPI people.
- **More Than 1.36 Million People Could Gain Coverage If Holdout States Accepted Expansion.** If Congress did the right thing and expanded Medicaid in the remaining holdout states, [more than 1.36 million](#) uninsured adults could gain coverage; people of color make up [60 percent](#) of this group, or roughly 780,000 people.

Medicaid Reduces Disparities In Coverage. Increasing Medicaid access is the single most important action available to expand coverage and address access to quality care as a driver of health. This, together with additional actions to address other social and structural determinants of health, can reduce racial/ethnic disparities in the American health care system. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) led

to historic reductions in racial/ethnic disparities in access to health care, but gaps in insurance coverage [narrowed the most](#) in states that adopted Medicaid expansion. In 2022, [6 percent](#) of Asian Americans were uninsured and [18 percent](#) had coverage through Medicaid, and [13 percent](#) of NHPI were uninsured and [35 percent](#) had coverage through Medicaid.

Medicaid Expansion Is Essential For Addressing Health Disparities. Research confirms that Medicaid expansion saves lives and [drastically reduces](#) racial/ethnic health coverage disparities. The AANHPI communities suffer from [high rates](#) of liver and stomach cancer, and also have the highest hepatitis B-related mortality rate and incidence of tuberculosis of any racial/ethnic group in the United States. In the remaining 10 holdout states that haven't expanded Medicaid, [6 in 10](#) people in the coverage gap are people of color. As of November 2023, [80 percent](#) of the country's AANHPIs lived in the 39 Medicaid expansion states and the District of Columbia.

Medicaid Coverage For Mothers Is Under Attack. The United States has the highest rate of [maternal deaths](#) of any high-income country. In 2023, Medicaid covered [22.5 percent](#) of Asian American births and [28.9 percent](#) of NHPI births. In recent years, public health officials and advocates have been sounding the alarm on the need to address the U.S.'s maternal health crisis. Thanks to Democrats in Congress, states were given the option to extend coverage to new mothers for one year postpartum – 49 states, [both red and blue](#), took advantage of it. With [one in three](#) pregnancy-related deaths occurring between six weeks and one year after birth, this extension is a vital policy in fighting the unacceptably high maternal mortality rate in the United States — but coverage could be at risk with GOP cuts to Medicaid. As part of their extremist and regressive crusade to erase all equity efforts, Republicans are targeting public health programs that collect data and address the unique challenges faced by moms of color. Republicans must be held accountable for dismantling life-saving health programs and coverage for new moms in order to hand out tax breaks to the wealthy.

Medicaid Is Essential For Children of Color. [37 million](#), or about 1 in 2 children across America are covered by Medicaid, and children of color disproportionately rely on Medicaid coverage, making robust Medicaid access a critical racial/ethnic justice issue for American children. AANHPI children make up [over 6.5 percent](#) of all American children and make up [over 3 percent](#) of the children on Medicaid. This coverage not only provides health coverage in the immediate term, but also provides [significant long-term benefits](#), such as being less likely to be hospitalized and more likely to graduate from high school and college.

LGBTQI+ People of Color Have Seen Reduced Health Disparities. Due to both systemic factors as well as [complex familial dynamics](#), the LGBTQI+ community is much more [at risk](#) of poverty and uninsurance than cisgender heterosexual Americans. Because of this, Medicaid has become a lifeline

for the LGBTQI+ community, especially people of color. AANHPI LGBTQI+ Americans are over [two times](#) as likely to have Medicaid as their primary insurance compared to cisgender heterosexual AANHPI individuals.

Medicaid Helps People With Behavioral Health Conditions. States that have expanded Medicaid have added [behavioral health benefits](#), including mental health and substance use disorder care, that particularly benefit beneficiaries of color who have disproportionately been affected by these conditions. Between 2010 and 2020, suicide-related death rates among adolescents more than [doubled](#) for Asian adolescents, from 2.2 to 5 deaths per 100,000 Asian American teens. Medicaid is the single-largest payer for mental health services in America. [40 percent](#) of adults on Medicaid are living with a serious mental health or substance use disorder. People in the AAPI community have also reported negative mental health impacts due to [heightened](#) anti-Asian racism and violence during the pandemic.