February 24, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Congress Must Fund Health Care, Not Attacks on Immigrants and Communities

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, and Members of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned 141 health advocacy and allied organizations, we urge Congress to prioritize addressing the health care affordability crisis and protecting vital health care programs rather than funding weaponized immigration agencies wreaking havoc in our communities. At a time when health care costs are skyrocketing, Congress should be supporting communities by strengthening Medicaid, restoring and extending enhanced premium tax credits for Marketplace coverage, as well as ensuring access to preventive, sexual, and reproductive health care. Instead, by enacting H.R. 1 last summer, President Trump and his allies in Congress cut[1] Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Marketplace coverage by more than a trillion dollars in order to dramatically expand[2] funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) violent mass deportation, detention, family separation, and anti-democracy efforts.

The health consequences of these decisions are neither speculative nor abstract. Already in 2026, more than a million people have lost access to care, and millions more who previously relied on

[1] *By the numbers: Harmful Republican megabill will take health coverage away from millions of people and raise families' costs*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2025, August 27). https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/by-the-numbers-harmful-republican-megabill-will-take-health-coverage-away-from

[2] Chappell, B. (2026, January 21). *How ICE grew to be the highest-funded U.S. Law Enforcement Agency*. NPR. https://www.npr.org/2026/01/21/nx-s1-5674887/ice-budget-funding-congress-trump

enhanced premium tax credits are paying on average an additional $1,000 for premiums.[3] The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the number of people without health insurance will increase by more than 14 million by 2034 as a result of H.R. 1's health insurance program cuts and the expiration of enhanced premium tax credits.[4] Scientists at Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania warned that the cuts along with the failure to extend enhanced premium tax credits will cause over 51,000 preventable deaths annually.[5]

Leading[6] medical and public health experts[7] have also warned[8] that immigration enforcement policies that drive fear,[9] detention,[10] and family separation directly worsen health outcomes and deepen existing inequities. People, including toddlers and older adults, in detention face alarming barriers to health care services and prescriptions for health conditions, jeopardizing their health and lives.[11] Pregnant and postpartum people in immigration detention face delayed treatment,

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[3] Lukens, G., & Zhang, E. (2025, November 3). *Health insurance premium spikes imminent as tax credit enhancements set to expire*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/health-insurance-premium-spikes-imminent-as-tax-credit-enhancements-set-to-expire

[4] Burns, A., Ortaliza, J., Lo, J., & Rae, M. (2025, August 20). *How will the 2025 reconciliation law affect the uninsured rate in each state?*. KFF. https://www.kff.org/uninsured/how-will-the-2025-reconciliation-law-affect-the-uninsured-rate-in-each-state/

[5] Robbins , J. (2025, June 25). *Yale scientists warn Medicaid cuts could cause 51,000 preventable deaths*. Yale Daily News. https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2025/06/26/yale-scientists-warn-medicaid-cuts-could-cause-51000-preventable-deaths/

[6] Aizuss, D. H. (2026, January 26). *AMA statement on Immigration Enforcement at hospitals [Press Release]*. American Medical Association. https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/ama-press-releases/ama-statement-immigration-enforcement-hospitals

[7] *American Academy of Nursing response to federal enforcement tactics as a public health concern*. American Academy of Nursing. (2026, January 26). https://aannet.org/news/718885/American-Academy-of-Nursing-Response-to-Federal-Enforcement-Tacticsas-a-Public-Health-Concern.htm

[8] Choi, J. (2026, February 4). *Leading OB/GYN organization recommends clinicians protect immigrants*. The Hill. https://thehill.com/newsletters/health-care/5723439-leading-ob-gyn-organization-recommends-clinicians-protect-immigrants/

[9] Tusinski, D., & Cloteaux, S. (2026, January 28). *ICE agents shatter window, leave 1-month-old baby, mother in car after Portland arrest*. The Portland Press Herald. https://www.pressherald.com/2026/01/28/ice-agents-shatter-window-leave-1-month-old-baby-mother-in-car-after-portland-arrest/?uuid=8322f2e4-2ac1-48fb-8e7c-0e0ac94b5378&lid=222199

[10] *Immigration detention is harmful to health – alternatives to detention should be used*. World Health Organization. (2022, May 4). https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/04-05-2022-immigration-detention-is-harmful-to-health---alternatives-to-detention-should-be-used

[11] Hixenbaugh, M. (2026, February 7). *Toddler hospitalized with respiratory failure was returned to ICE detention and denied prescribed medication, lawsuit says.* NBC News. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/toddler-hospitalized-dilley-ice-detention-rcna257912; Brief for Justice in Aging as Amicus Curiae in Support of Plaintiff at 1, *Rodriguez-Vasquez v.*

inadequate medical care, and conditions fundamentally incompatible with safe pregnancy and recovery.[12] Obstetricians and gynecologists report that patients are delaying or forgoing prenatal and postnatal care, skipping cancer screenings and STI testing, and losing access to essential abortion, family planning, and pregnancy-related care out of fear of enforcement or loss of coverage.[13]

These harms are compounded by the elimination of long-standing "sensitive locations" protections.[14] By allowing ICE and CBP to conduct enforcement at or near health care facilities, schools, and other essential community spaces, the administration has transformed places of care and safety into sources of fear. Individuals are forced into impossible choices between their health and their safety. Providers are placed in untenable positions, unable to assure patients that seeking care will not expose them or their loved ones to detention or deportation. The predictable result is a chilling effect on care that endangers the public's health and hurts families.

These outcomes are not incidental. As the wealthiest country in the world, we should not have a health care affordability crisis, health insurance coverage gaps, or a maternal mortality epidemic. Exacerbating these challenges by pouring tens of billions of dollars into ICE and CBP's escalating attacks on both immigrant families and individuals exercising their constitutionally protected right to free speech is a political choice. Congress must swiftly act to address skyrocketing health care costs and protect access to health care for all. We call on Congress to:

- Repeal the immigration enforcement funding provisions of H.R. 1 and claw back funds appropriated to ICE and CBP at the expense of health care and basic needs programs.
- Reverse efforts that make it harder for people to access health care, including cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and ACA Marketplace coverage; and access to providers, such as Planned Parenthood and other providers of sexual and reproductive health care.
- Strengthen the above health care programs, including closing Medicaid coverage gaps and restoring and extending enhanced premium tax credits for Marketplace coverage.

Bostock, No. 25-6842 (9th Cir. Jan. 28, 2026), https://justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2026-01-28-Dkt-42-1-FILED-Rodriguez-Vasquez-Amicus-Brief.pdf.

[12] Sainato, M. (2025, August 6). *"Horrific": report reveals abuse of pregnant women and children at US ICE facilities*. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/aug/06/physical-sexual-abuse-pregnant-women-children-immigration-centers

[13] Barclay, M. L., & Luthra, S. (2025, October 7). *ICE fears put pregnant immigrants and their babies at risk*. The 19th. https://19thnews.org/2025/10/pregnant-immigrants-ice-fears-deportation/

[14] Pearson, L. D. (2025, February 26). *Factsheet: Trump's rescission of protected areas policies undermines safety for all*. National Immigration Law Center. https://www.nilc.org/resources/factsheet-trumps-rescission-of-protected-areas-policies-undermines-safety-for-all/

- Demand meaningful and enforceable measures to rein in ICE and CBP and require compliance with civil rights laws, medical standards of care, and due process as a condition of any further DHS funding.

At this moment, Congress faces a clear choice. It can continue misusing taxpayer dollars to fund attacks on immigrants and communities instead of funding health care—deepening health inequities, chilling health care access, and putting lives at risk—or it can act to restore and improve health care coverage and safety for individuals, families, and communities across the country. Health care access is a prerequisite for dignity, imperative for national security, and vital for freedom.

There is no justification for cutting care to fund cruelty. Congress must act now to fund health care, protect communities, and end policies that weaponize fear and undermine the health of our communities.

If we can provide any assistance on this matter, please contact Mia Villaseñor, Senior Specialist, Legislative Affairs at Planned Parenthood Action Fund (mia.villasenor@ppfa.org) and Madeline Morcelle, Senior Attorney at the National Health Law Program (morcelle@healthlaw.org).

Sincerely,

National Organizations
Abortion Access Front
Advocates for Youth
AFT: Education, Healthcare, Public Services
AIDS United
All* Above All
Allies for Independence
American Atheists
American College of Nurse-Midwives
APRADE
Autistic People of Color Fund
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice
BLKHLTH
Caring Across Generations
Castle Consulting
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
CenterLink
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Community Catalyst
Defend Public Health
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Drug Policy Alliance

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Feminist Majority
First Focus Campaign for Children
Guttmacher Institute
Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network
Health Care for America Now
HealthConnect One
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA- JPIC
Ibis Reproductive Health
ICAN! (Implementing Contraceptive Access Now)
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
Indigenous Women Rising
Institute for Women's Policy Research
interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth
Justice in Aging
Latino Commission on AIDS
Legal Action Center
MomsRising
NAACP
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Youth Law
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Law Program
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Network To End Domestic Violence
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center
National Women's Political Caucus
NBJC
People Power United
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Action Fund
Positive Women's Network-USA
Power to Decide
PrEP4All
Prevention Institute
Pride At Work
Progressive Vietnamese American Organization (PIVOT)

Protect Our Care
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Reproaction
Reproductive Freedom for All
Reproductive Health Access Project
SEIU
SiX Action
Society for Public Health Education
South Asian Public Health Association (SAPHA)
Stop AAPI Hate
TechTonic Justice
UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Voices for Progress
Voices of Health Care Action
WV Healthy Start/HAPI

California-Based Organizations
ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE
Ahri Center
Alliance for TransYouth Rights
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California
Atheists United
California Association of Nurse Midwives
California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
Equality California
Health Access California
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maternal and Child Health Access
Nevada County Citizens for Choice
Oasis Legal Services
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
SWANS

Colorado-Based Organizations
Alianza NORCO
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Rocky Mountain Equality

Florida-Based Organizations
Access Ready Inc.
Florida Health Justice Project

Georgia-Based Organizations
Serving at-risk families everywhere, Inc.
SisterLove, Inc.

Hawaii-Based Organizations
Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!

Illinois-Based Organizations
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group
Legal Council for Health Justice
SisterReach Illinois

Maine-Based Organizations
Maine Equal Justice
Maine Women's Lobby

Maryland-Based Organizations
Advance Maryland
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Public Justice Center

Massachusetts-Based Organizations
Health Law Advocates
Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice (also located in Rhode Island)
Massachusetts Physicians for National Health Care Program
Personal Disability Consulting, Inc.

Michigan-Based Organizations
Center for Civil Justice
The Lookout Project

Minnesota-Based Organizations
Our Justice
Pro-Choice Minnesota

Nebraska-Based Organizations
Nebraska Appleseed

New Jersey-Based Organizations
WADEIn NJ

New York-Based Organizations
Safety Net Project at the Urban Justice Center
New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)

North Carolina-Based Organizations
North Carolina Justice Center
Disability Rights North Carolina

Ohio-Based Organizations
Abortion Forward
New Voices for Reproductive Justice (also located in Pennsylvania)

Pennsylvania-Based Organizations
New Voices for Reproductive Justice (also located in Ohio)

Rhode Island-Based Organizations
Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice (also located in Massachusetts)

Tennessee-Based Organizations
Tennessee Justice Center
SisterReach, Inc.

Texas-Based Organizations
Center for Civic and Public Policy Improvement
Every Texan
Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry (TXUUJM)

Washington-Based Organizations
Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA)

Wisconsin-Based Organizations
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault