

US Senator Maria Cantwell
Senate Democrats Medicaid Stakeout

June 3rd, 2025

Senator Cantwell Remarks

[\[AUDIO\]](#) [\[VIDEO\]](#)

Sen. Cantwell: Thank you. It's great to be here with Leader Schumer and my colleague from Minnesota, Senator Klobuchar. We're here today to talk about the reconciliation bill that makes Medicaid cuts that is literally just another attempt to repeal the advancements of the Affordable Care Act. American families said no before to repealing the Affordable Care Act, and families are saying no now to repealing parts of the Affordable Care Act.

Here are some of the facts from the Urban Institute. By covering more people, the Affordable Care Act improved access to care, covered millions more of Americans, and helped us lower costs. But the provisions in the House reconciliation bill will reverse those gains. And for what? To give a tax break to the ultra-wealthy or to corporations that don't need it?

CBO estimates that because of these changes in the house reconciliation bill, there will be 15.9 million more Americans who don't have insurance over the next 10 years. That is more than a 50% increase in the number of people who are currently uninsured. That would reverse the coverage gains by the Affordable Care Act. This would raise costs on all of us.

The decision of the Affordable Care Act to be expanded was a good idea. Missouri providers thought so. Emergency room visits in that state dropped by 15% on the uninsured. States that expanded Medicaid overall saw a 55% drop in hospital uncompensated care costs. In Missouri, after the Medicaid expansion, they saw their uninsured rate decline from about 50% to 35%.

So, now what is going to happen when you cut Medicaid and more of those people are now going to return to the ranks of the uninsured? Missouri chose to participate in the expansion, and over 300,000 people gained that insurance, but now they are at risk of losing it again.

If this bill is enacted, reversing the gains of the Affordable Care Act, it will increase our uncompensated care cost. One estimate, \$42 billion alone in 2026 of uncompensated care, and \$278 billion in uncompensated care increases over a 10 year window. At the same time, the provisions put into the House reconciliation bill leaves providers and states with[out] any tools that they could do to address this. This bill could cause a \$1 trillion decrease in health care services, leaving states to try to grapple with that hit and rural areas will be the most hard hit.

The result in declining revenue would have adverse consequences for at-risk hospitals and rural communities. We have all heard from our rural hospitals warning us about this. How is it that our Republican Senate colleagues are not listening to those rural hospitals?

The Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform has reported that 1/3 of all rural hospitals in the country are already at risk, closing because of the pressures they face from

financial losses on patient care, limited revenues, and other low financial reserves. So this bill puts already at-risk rural hospitals in even a more potential state of possible closure.

Do our Republican colleagues not care about delivery of health care in our rural community and the spillover effect it has to their economies? This is not scare tactics. This is a bill, if enacted, [that] will not result in savings. It will result in an increase in the uninsured. It will result in financial stresses on our system, and it will increase costs on all of us. And yes, it will cost lives.