

Protecting Medicaid: What can providers do?

INFORMATION TO HELP YOU ADVOCATE TO GEORGIA SENATORS

Federal Medicaid cuts could severely impact Georgia's disability services, leading to lower provider reimbursement rates, staff shortages, and reduced access to care. With over 7,000 Georgians already on waiting lists for NOW/COMP waivers, further funding restrictions could leave even more without essential support. These cuts would strain an already fragile system, making it harder for people with disabilities to receive the care they need. Georgia's congressional Senators can help prevent these harmful changes. Your advocacy is crucial to protecting Medicaid's role in stability, workforce retention, and cost-effective care!

This document provides:



- *Information about why you should advocate to Georgia Senators to block Medicaid Cuts*
- *Information about GA Senators you can contact*
- *Information about why and how you should engage with GA Senators to advocate to save Medicaid*

Advocacy Priorities to Share with Senators

Ossoff & Warnock

Medicaid funding impacts provider reimbursement rates, workforce retention, and service availability. Senators Ossoff and Warnock hold key committee positions and legislative tools to block cuts, protect funding, and ensure providers can continue delivering essential supports. Engaging them is critical to safeguarding the future of disability services in Georgia.



Preserving Critical Services Medicaid funds essential disability long term services and supports (LTSS), including home- and community-based supports that more than 14,000 Georgians with intellectual and developmental disabilities depend on. These services are provided by hundreds of HCBS providers in Georgia. Cuts may force providers to reduce services, lay off staff, or shut down entirely, leading to gaps in care.



Making Critical Services Available to Those Who Need Them In Georgia, there are more than 7,000 people on the waiting list for NOW/COMP waivers, which are funded by Medicaid. Currently, the state government is planning to open only 100 new waiver spots in 2025, leaving too many people without needed services. Cutting Medicaid or restricting eligibility would likely mean that even more people who need services would not be able to get them.



Assisting with Workforce Stability Medicaid supports thousands of jobs in healthcare and disability services. Cuts would strain local economies, leading to job losses and overburdened healthcare facilities. It would also perpetuate significant staffing shortages and retention challenges in agencies that support people with disabilities. In 2023, the average turnover rate of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) was 32%, with approximately 75% of those who left their jobs employed for less than one year. Organizations may struggle to cover expenses or keep up future cost of living increases for employees, particularly if provider rates cannot again increase in the next several years. This may lead to even more turnover or challenges with workforce retention.



Preventing Costlier Emergency & Institutional Care Medicaid HCBS supports prevent costly hospitalizations and institutional placements. Recent calculations estimate that HCBS per person costs are 25% to 50% less than institutional services. Cuts would shift costs to emergency departments, ultimately increasing state healthcare expenditures.



Long-Term Societal Costs Reduced Medicaid funding would negatively impact Georgia's public health, increase reliance on social safety nets, and decrease opportunities for people with disabilities to contribute to their towns and cities if there are not enough resources to support them in living and working in the community.



Workforce Burnout & Engagement Service providers already face staffing shortages due, in part, to high work demands and low wages. Further cuts will worsen the crisis if employees need to do more work with fewer resources.

Georgia Senators

U.S. Senators Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock have several key powers and responsibilities that make them influential in blocking Medicaid cuts and advancing disability rights.

Legislator

Senator Jon Ossoff (D)

2021-Present



Website:

<https://www.ossoff.senate.gov>

Contact: 303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3521

Senator Raphael G. Warnock (D)

2021-Present



Website:

<https://www.warnock.senate.gov>

Contact: 416 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3643

Committees

[Committee on Appropriations](#)

[Committee on Rules and Administration](#)

[Joint Committee on the Library](#)

[Select Committee on Intelligence](#)

[Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry](#)
[Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs](#)

Subcommittee on Economic Policy (Ranking)
Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

[Committee on Finance](#)
[Special Committee on Aging](#)

Potential Influence

Serves on the **Appropriations Committee**, which directly impacts Medicaid funding decision.

Ossoff helps determine how federal money is allocated, including Medicaid funding

Serves on the **Finance Committee**, which oversees Medicaid policy and funding.

Warnock influences tax and healthcare funding policies that directly impact Medicaid's financial sustainability

Relevant Participation in Medicaid Legislation

S.4684 - Bridge to Medicaid Act of 2024

Co-sponsored, 2024

To ensure affordable health insurance coverage for low-income people in States that have not expanded Medicaid.

S.2315 - Medicaid Saves Lives Act117th

Co-sponsored, 2021

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a program to provide health care coverage to low-income adults in States that have not expanded Medicaid.

S.4684 - Bridge to Medicaid Act of 2024

Sponsored, 2024

To ensure affordable health insurance coverage for low-income people in States that have not expanded Medicaid.

S.1774 - ASSIST Act

Sponsored, 2023

To amend the Social Security Act to provide for an increased Federal medical assistance percentage for State expenditures on certain behavioral health services furnished under the Medicaid program, and for other purposes.

Sources

[Jon Ossoff | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#); [Raphael G. Warnock | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

Why Engage with Senators Ossoff & Warnock?

Senators Ossoff and Warnock hold key committee positions, influence Senate negotiations, and can use legislative tools like voting, filibustering, and amendments to block Medicaid cuts. Engaging them ensures that Medicaid remains fully funded in Georgia.

What Can They Do?

How Can They Do It?

Block Harmful Legislation

If a bill proposing Medicaid cuts is introduced, they can vote against it and rally other senators to oppose it.

Amend Bills

During Senate debates, they can push for amendments that prevent Medicaid cuts or increase funding for disability services.

Press & Public Statements

Senators can use media platforms to highlight the importance of Medicaid and pressure Congress to maintain or increase funding.

Hold Hearings & Investigations

They can call for hearings on how Medicaid cuts would impact people with disabilities and service providers.

Urge HHS & CMS to Protect Medicaid

They can lobby the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to block harmful policy changes at the federal level.

Advocate for State Medicaid Expansion

Georgia has not fully expanded Medicaid. Federal lawmakers can push for incentives to encourage the state to do so.

Rally Other Lawmakers

They can organize Democratic senators and moderate Republicans to oppose Medicaid cuts.

Negotiate Compromises

If budget cuts are proposed, they can work to minimize their impact on Medicaid recipients.

Strategies for Advocating to Senators Ossoff & Warnock



Service providers for people with disabilities can advocate against Medicaid cuts by leveraging their expertise, networks, and influence. Here are key strategies tailored to their role:

Advocacy Strategy

How to Do It

Schedule Meetings

Request virtual or in-person meetings with their offices to discuss how Medicaid cuts would impact service delivery.

Facility Tours

Invite legislators and staff to visit service sites to see firsthand how Medicaid funds support people with disabilities.

Submit Testimonies

Provide expert testimonies with real-world data on how funding cuts would harm services and increase costs.

Empower People with Disabilities & Families to Advocate

Host letter-writing campaigns with clients sharing personal stories. Assist families in making calls or attending town halls.

Create Video Testimonials

Capture stories from clients and caregivers explaining why Medicaid funding is critical.

Form Coalitions

Partner with other service providers, hospitals, and disability organizations in Georgia to present a united front.

Sign Joint Letters & Petitions

Send official statements from multiple service providers opposing Medicaid cuts. [Resources from the Autistic Self Advocacy Network can help crafting these.](#)

Provide Impact Analysis

Show how Medicaid cuts would force service reductions, layoffs, or increased emergency room visits. Highlight the economic contributions of Medicaid-funded disability services in Georgia.

Social Media Advocacy

Post infographics and statistics on Medicaid's impact. Tag @SenOssoff and @SenatorWarnock in advocacy tweets. Use hashtags like #ProtectMedicaid #SaveOurServices.

Community Education Forums

Host webinars or town halls to inform the public about potential policy changes.