

It is always worth your time to help policymakers understand how Medicaid helps you live your life. Congress is thinking about making big cuts to Medicaid. There may be several bills that include Medicaid cuts. Things could change quickly.

Medicaid 2025

What People are Hearing from Congressional
Offices & Next Steps You Can Take

February 20, 2025



Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities

Connecting with lawmakers on Medicaid is always worth your time

- You are an expert in your own life and on Medicaid. You know what help you need and get from Medicaid and what it would mean if you got less help.
- Most lawmakers do not know much about Medicaid. They do not know who is in Medicaid and why it is important to people with disabilities.
- They do not know that the DD waivers and CCC Plus waiver are an alternative to living in an institution and make it possible for people with disabilities to live in the community and stay out of costly facilities.
- They do not know who is in Medicaid and how many local jobs rely on Medicaid to pay their workers and provide health and long-term services and supports.

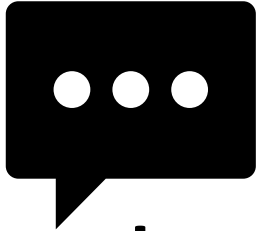
The latest we are hearing from national advocates

- Your calls to Congress are making a difference!
- There are some Medicaid cuts that have support right now and others where your calls are making lawmakers question how cuts will impact the areas they represent.
- Many disability constituents are connecting with lawmakers about Medicaid.
- They are learning what members of Congress think about Medicaid.
- Some members of Congress believe things about Medicaid that are not true or do not reflect how Medicaid works in real life for people.

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers about Medicaid?

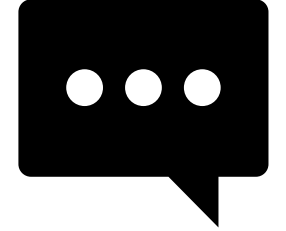
Ways people who use Medicaid have responded.

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

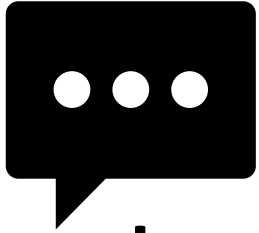
“There is a lot of fraud, waste, and abuse in Medicaid. Cutting Medicaid will stop Medicaid fraud.”



Disability constituent says...

“I don’t commit fraud and neither do any of the people I know who use Medicaid. Cutting the program doesn’t get rid of fraud. Audits and other tools can do that.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

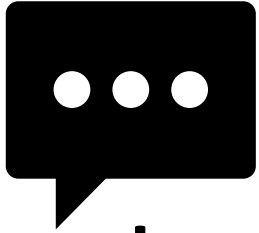
“Your loved one won’t be harmed. We are just rooting out fraud and abuse.”



Disability constituent says...

“You cannot guarantee that big cuts to Medicaid will not mean less care or support for me. I can’t afford less care. Cutting money that pays for care harms people like me. It does nothing to prevent fraud.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

“People like you are not the target.”

“These cuts won’t apply to people like you.”

“We can target able-bodied people without dependents.”

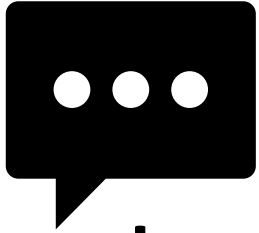


Disability constituent says...

“People like me will be collateral damage. Big cuts to Medicaid affect everyone who gets paid by Medicaid or relies on Medicaid for health and long-term services and supports. There is no way to single out certain people and have cuts only apply to them.”

P.S. Who is the target and why?

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

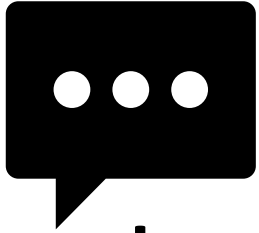
Sees Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security or the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) as the same.



Disability constituent says...

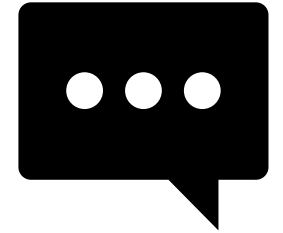
“Medicaid is different from X, Y, or Z. Medicaid is the only place I can get the help I need to make sure I do not end up in a nursing home or institution. Medicaid serves poor people. Most people in Medicaid are kids, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and older adults.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

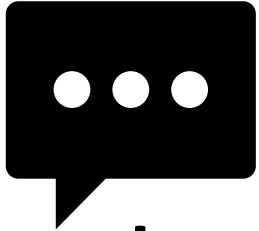
“My positions on Medicaid are on my website.” (Website has no positions on Medicaid, only the Affordable Care Act.)



Disability constituent says...

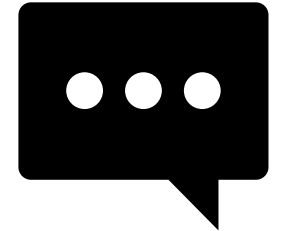
“I would like to hear your positions now from you. Your website has general health care information, but I want to know what you will do to prevent cuts specifically to Medicaid.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

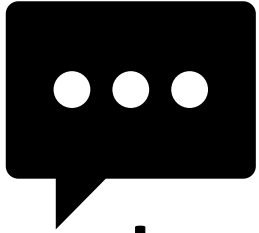
“Don’t worry, these cuts won’t happen.”



Disability constituent says...

“I am worried. I can’t afford any cuts to Medicaid. What are you going to do to make sure there are no cuts to Medicaid?”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

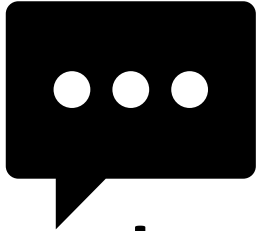
“We don’t intend to hurt people with I/DD.”



Disability constituent says...

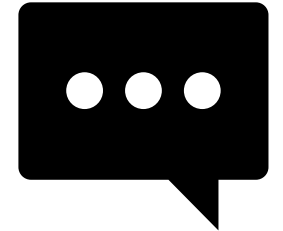
“Just because you don’t intend to harm people with I/DD doesn’t mean it won’t happen. People with I/DD rely on Medicaid for many things for a long time, often a lifetime. Our people will feel Medicaid cuts the most because we use it the most.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

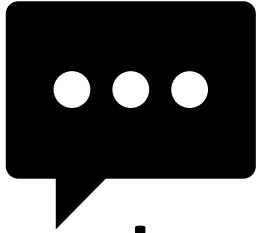
“We’ll put protections in place so people with I/DD are not impacted.”



Disability constituent says...

“Medicaid right now promises people with I/DD will get the supports they need their entire lives. There is no need to change the way Medicaid is funded or cut funding.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

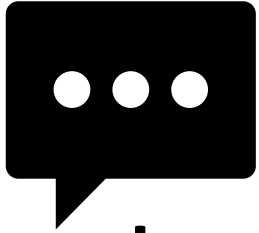
“We will exempt people with I/DD.”



Disability constituent says...

“Exemptions never include everyone who needs services, and who is exempt can change at anytime. There will be people with disabilities that need help who will be kept out of Medicaid.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

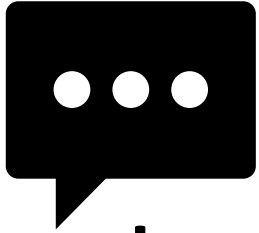
“It will be up to the states to decide whether they cut Medicaid programs.”



Disability constituent says...

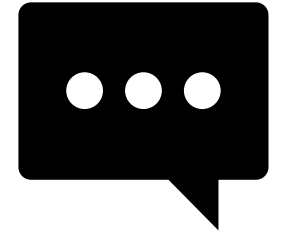
“Federal Medicaid cuts mean states can’t pay for their current Medicaid programs without changes. Congress is making a decision that will hurt states and impact everyone living there.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

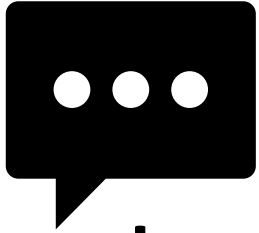
"We aren't cutting Medicaid services."



Disability constituent says...

"Federal cuts mean big state budget holes. You are cutting the money that funds the services, and passing the burden to decide how to cut programs to states."

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

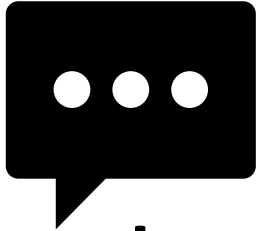
“These cuts won’t occur right away.”



Disability constituent says...

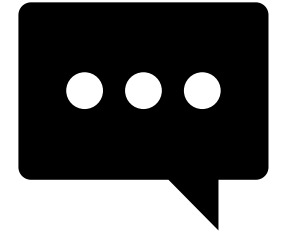
“I will need services in two years. I will need services in 5 and 10 years and beyond. If my services or supports are reduced at all, it will mean X for me no matter when it happens.”

What are disability constituents hearing from lawmakers



Lawmaker says...

“There isn’t a bill so I don’t know what will be in it. We need to know what it says first.”



Disability constituent says...

“Some of these ideas were in a bill that failed by one vote in 2017. A menu of cuts has been published, and there has been media coverage of these ideas.”

Advocacy Tips!

Be assertive. Correct lawmakers when they say things that are incorrect or do not match your Medicaid experience.

Challenge lawmaker assumptions about who is in Medicaid and how Medicaid money is used.

Keep listening. What you hear from lawmakers may change.

Keep talking. Keep the focus on how Medicaid cuts impact you, your family, the local workforce, your community.

Lawmakers may change messages to constituents, but that is not the same as changing how they might vote on Medicaid cuts.

Action Step #1: Keep engaging with federal lawmakers.

They need to understand Medicaid, what Medicaid means to constituents, and how lives will change if Medicaid is cut.

5 elected legislative officials represent you



Two U.S. Senators



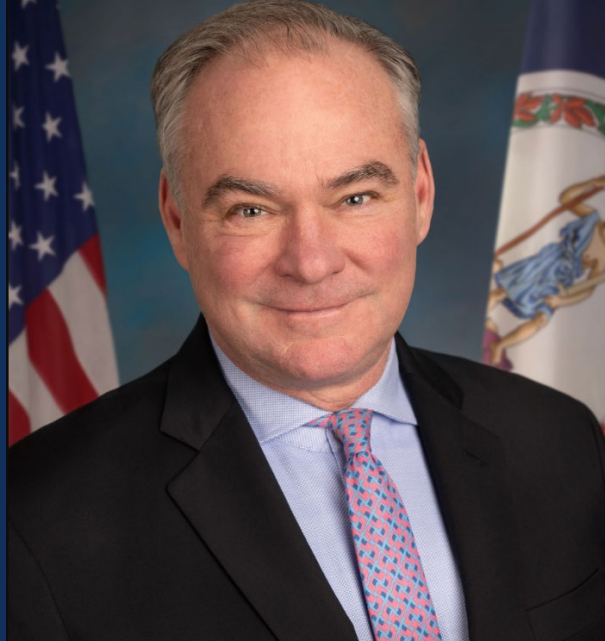
One U.S. Congressional Representative



One Virginia State Senator and One Virginia State Delegate

- Program their phone numbers and e-mail into your phone.
- You can e-mail or leave a message any time. It's ok to contact them whenever you can, even at night.
- Don't counsel yourself out of making the connection!
- Plan on checking in and following up frequently.
- **Let us know what you hear from them.** It helps advocates know what messages lawmakers need to hear.

Virginia's U.S. Senators



Sen. Tim Kaine (D)	Sen. Mark Warner (D)
(202) 224-4024	(202) 224-2023
https://www.kaine.senate.gov/	https://www.warner.senate.gov/public/

Last updated 01/29/2025

3 elected legislative officials represent you

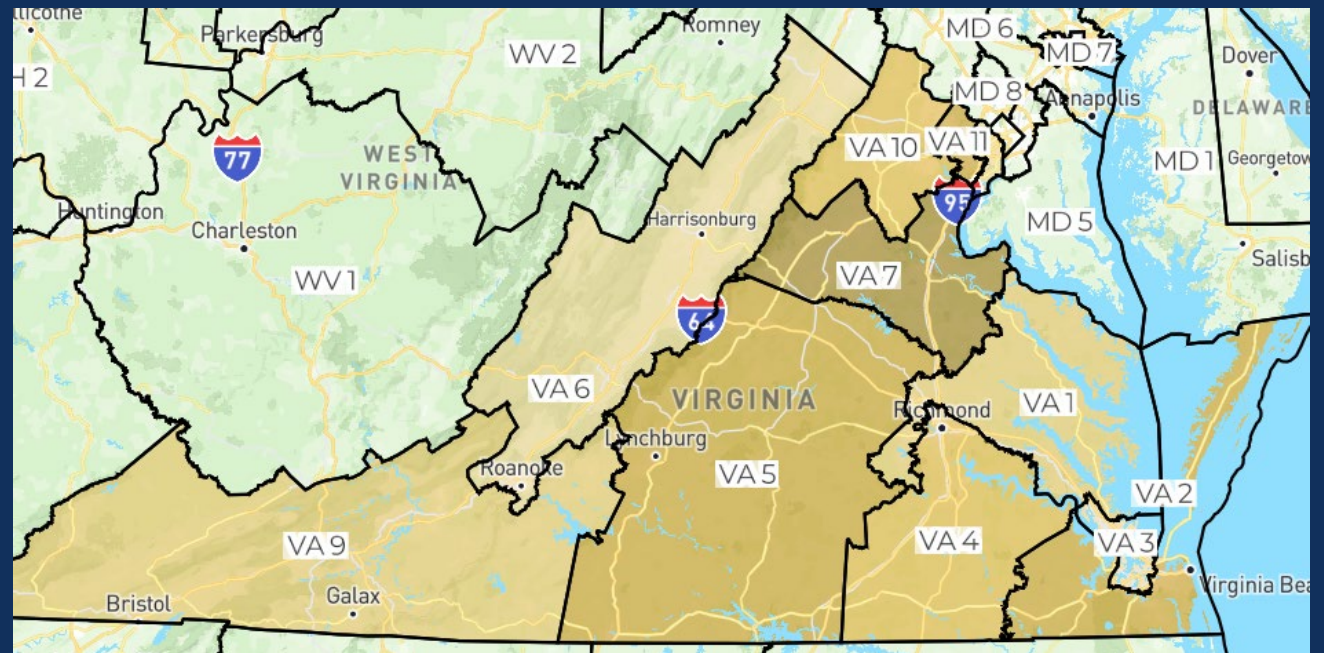
Federal Government

Two U.S. Senators

- Sen. Tim Kaine: (202) 224-4024
- Sen. Mark Warner: (202) 224-2023

One U.S. Congressional Rep.

- Look up your federal Rep at <https://www.house.gov/>
- Rob Wittman (1), Jen Kiggans (2), Bobby Scott (3), Jennifer McClellan (4), John McGuire (5), Ben Cline (6), Eugene Vindman (7), Don Beyer (8), Morgan Griffith (9), Suhas Subramanyam (10), Gerry Connolly (11)



Virginia U.S. House Representatives



Rep. Robert Wittman (1)	Rep. Jen Kiggans (2)	Rep. Bobby Scott (3)	Rep. Jennifer McClellan (4)	Rep. John McGuire (5)	Rep. Ben Cline (6)
(202) 225-4261	(202) 225-4215	(202) 225-8354	(202) 225-4572	(202) 225-4711	(202) 225-5431



Look up your Rep at <https://www.house.gov/>

Rep. Eugene Vindman (7)	Rep. Don Beyer (8)	Rep. Morgan Griffith (9)	Rep. Suhas Subramanyam (10)	Rep. Gerry Connolly (11)
(202) 225-2815	(202) 225-4376	(202) 225-3861	(202) 225-5136	(202) 226-1492

Sign up for lawmakers' newsletters and follow their social media accounts

Lawmakers' constituent newsletters

- Includes information about in-district town halls and events members will attend
- Includes information on policy topics the member chooses to highlight for constituent
- Is Medicaid part of what they are talking about with constituents?
- What are they saying about Medicaid?
- Does it reflect your lived experience?
- May have polls or ask for feedback

Social Media accounts

- Most members have official social media accounts (Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, etc.).
- Follow what they are saying (or not saying).
- Comment on posts related to Medicaid or requesting feedback on issues constituents think are important.
- **TIP: AI Trolls respond to comments. Don't engage. Don't take it personally.**

Call Washington DC *and* in-district offices

DC Office

- Has Health/Medicaid policy staff who is the office expert on their topic.
- Follows federal bills and advises member on Medicaid changes.
- Job is to listen to people's opinions on health care bills. Advises member on health policy positions.
- Often DC office develops messages/responses to constituents.

In-District Office

- Role is constituent services.
- Job is to track and report to DC office about what they hear from constituents.
- Holds in-district meetings with constituents.
- Knows when members will be in-district and when they are holding listening sessions or will be at events.

What are disability constituents asking for when they call?

- Who is your lead health or Medicaid policy person? What is their contact information?
- Request specific person to email Medicaid story and more information about Medicaid.
- Request for a phone or Zoom meeting to discuss Medicaid cut concerns.
- Request for an in-district meeting.
- Request follow-up with lawmaker on their positions on Medicaid cuts.



What to do if the office does not want to give you health policy staff name or contact information

- Ask again. You want a relationship with the person who is talking to the member about Medicaid.
- Work e-mail addresses and employee names in public offices that serve constituents can be shared.
- Constituent communication is a part of the work. You are a constituent.
- If policy staff is not available, leaving a message and following up with an e-mail with what you said on the phone is important.
- Ask for the health policy staff every time you call.

Meeting request script

“Hello, my name is Jenny Jones, and I live in Chesterfield, VA. I’m calling because I/my family member uses X, which is a Medicaid program. I’m very concerned about proposed cuts to Medicaid. I know Congressman X has a local office, so I would like to schedule a meeting with the health policy staffer to talk through my concerns.”

You can meet one-on-one or as part of a group

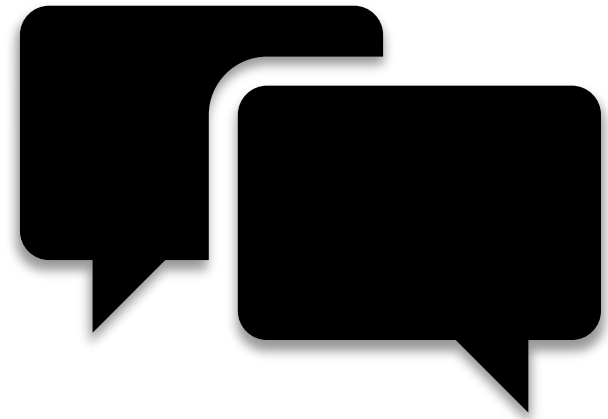
- It is helpful to practice what you want to say before the meeting.
- If you are part of a group of local disability constituents attending a meeting, having a planning meeting is a good idea.
- Everyone can make sure the points they make complement each other and everyone can contribute.
- If you get a meeting with a legislator and want to do a prep meeting and/or find other people to go with you:
 - Contact:
 - Teri.Morgan@vbpd.virginia.gov
 - Jennifer.Krajewski@vbpd.virginia.gov

What to talk about when you get a meeting

- Your personal story about how Medicaid matters to you and your family.
- Other people you know who rely on Medicaid and would be impacted by Medicaid cuts.
- The number of people that help you who are paid by Medicaid whose jobs would be impacted if Medicaid did not provide care to everyone who needs it.
- Professional experience that shows how many different people would be impacted by Medicaid cuts.

What people have asked for in meetings

- Asked member to commit to not voting for Medicaid cuts.
- Asked for in-district Medicaid forum.
- Asked what member is doing to publicly talk about how Medicaid cuts will impact people in their districts.
- Asked what member is hearing from Virginia delegation about Medicaid cuts.
- Asked member to convince other members of Virginia delegation not to support Medicaid cuts.



Attend in-district town halls and speak about Medicaid with your member of Congress

- Be prepared to share your story in 3 minutes.
- Go by yourself or get together a group of disability advocates. Attending together shows many people are concerned.
- If you have a local group, talk to each other before so everyone's story shows how many impacts there would be if Medicaid is cut.
- Be sure to have an “ask.”
- Can you commit to preventing cuts to Medicaid?
- Will you talk to others in the VA delegation about protecting Medicaid?

Medicaid resources you can use with lawmakers

DMAS **MEDICAID AT A GLANCE 2024** **CardinalCare**
Virginia's Medicaid Program

Virginia Medicaid Overview

The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) plays an essential role in the Commonwealth's health care system by offering health care coverage to more than one in five Virginians through our Medicaid program, known as Cardinal Care. Cardinal Care covers over 2 million Virginians; the largest populations being low-income adults and children. Other groups covered include people with disabilities, older adults, and pregnant women. This document highlights key priorities for 2024.

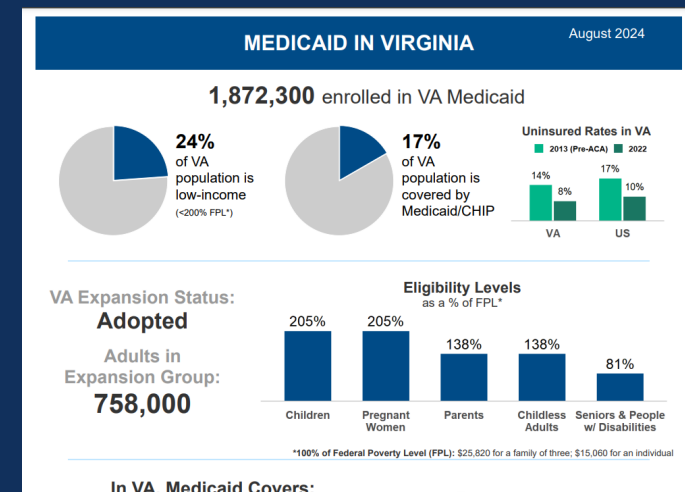
2024 DMAS PRIORITIES

- Member Experience and Engagement
- BHHS: Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder
- MCO Procurement
- Unwinding (Renewals)
- Maternal and Child Health
- Foster Care
- Partnership for Petersburg
- Integrated Living
- Workforce and Organizational Development
- Program Innovation and Operational Efficiency
- Fiscal Integrity and Accountability
- Improved Health Outcomes and Metrics

Cardinal Care Managed Care – For more than two decades health care coverage is provided through managed care organizations. The managed care model provides coverage to more than 96% of members. DMAS released a request for proposals to reprocure the managed care system on August 31, 2023, for a regional implementation starting in fall 2024. For this large-scale, competitive procurement, DMAS has taken a strategic approach that prioritizes financial accountability, access to high-quality care, and support for targeted populations, including behavioral and maternal health and members in the child welfare system.

Virginia Medicaid at a Glance (DMAS)

https://www.dmas.virginia.gov/media/i2lpz2in/medicaid_at_a_glance_2024_v16.pdf



Virginia Medicaid Factsheet (Kaiser Health)

<https://files.kff.org/attachment/factsheet-medicaid-state-VA>

Last updated 01/29/2025

Action Step #2: Many people and workers will be impacted by Medicaid cuts.

Help other people get information and act themselves.

Are people who get paid by Medicaid contacting lawmakers?

People with disabilities

- Ask your case managers, service providers, personal care agencies, therapists, and other people who provide services if they are aware of potential Medicaid cuts.
- Have they called their federal lawmakers?
- What are their companies doing to tell lawmakers not to cut Medicaid?
- What are their national organizations doing to tell lawmakers not to cut Medicaid?

Professionals, service providers

- Are you making personal calls to your lawmakers?
- Does your company have a position against Medicaid cuts? Have they communicated it to lawmakers?
- Does your professional organization have a position against Medicaid cuts? Have they communicated it to lawmakers?
- Is your organization a member of a national trade association? Is the trade association advocating against Medicaid cuts?

Spreading the word about Medicaid cuts

Many people have sent a fact sheet, Medicaid story, alerts and action steps to:

- Rare disease, disability-specific, or professional organization list-servs.
- National groups or organizations in other states.
- Network of friends and relatives in other states.
- You can share any materials from us with others.
- If you are looking for specific information about Medicaid, let us know and we may be able to help.

Making a story pitch to the media

Congress is considering [\\$2.17 Trillion in federal Medicaid spending cuts](#) that will take money away from states.

Big cuts will impact Virginia's state budget, the 1.8 M Virginians who get health and long-term services and supports coverage through programs funded by Medicaid, and Virginia's workforce.

People in Medicaid are low-income. Many can't get the health and long-term services and supports they need anywhere but Medicaid.

Trillions of dollars in Medicaid cuts hurts low-income pregnant women and kids, people with disabilities, older adults, and people with mental illness.

Federal Medicaid money pays workers' salaries and supports small businesses that provide services in Virginia Medicaid Waiver programs (CL, FIS, BI and CCC Plus), hospitals, county governments, mental health professionals, therapists, school-based medical services, and many other jobs in every corner of Virginia.

Would you be interested in doing a series on the economic and human impact Medicaid cuts will have everywhere in Virginia?

Sample Medicaid letter

Right now, Congress is seriously talking about several ways to make big cuts to Medicaid, a program that provides important health care and community supports to people with disabilities, frail elders, pregnant women and children, and other vulnerable people.

More than 1.8 million Virginia residents depend on Medicaid for health care coverage, and 34% of births in Virginia are covered by Medicaid.

People with disabilities and older adults depend on Medicaid not just for health care, but for supports in their home, like help bathing and meal prep. These supports let people stay in their homes like they want and keep them out of costly nursing homes and facilities.

Many of our local businesses also depend on Medicaid dollars, like therapists, schools, doctors, home health agencies, residential supports, medical equipment and more.

51% of Virginia's Medicaid comes from the federal government, but both Congress and our state legislators make decisions on how much is spent and where the money goes.

If you, a loved one, or a business you use depends on Medicaid, now is the time to call your Congressperson, U.S. Senators Kaine and Warner, and your state senator and delegate. Tell them no cuts to Medicaid.

Take Action!

Federal and State lawmakers need to know how Medicaid helps you and your family, and what it would mean for your life if the services and supports you have are reduced or stopped.

Check the VBPD website for resources: www.vbpd.virginia.gov



**Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities**