

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 19, 2025

Governor Mike DeWine  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>TH</sup> Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Dear Governor DeWine,

We write to express our concern regarding recent efforts by the State of Ohio to reinstate and enforce employment requirements for Medicaid beneficiaries. More than 2 million Ohioans are presently covered by Medicaid and depend on it for access to safe and affordable healthcare.<sup>1</sup> Medicaid exists to provide essential healthcare and support to those who rely on it the most.

On December 17, 2024, the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) proposed a Group VIII 1115 Demonstration Waiver that would expand work requirements for participating in the program. Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), more than 600,000 Ohioans gained covered as a result of Ohio's Medicaid expansion.<sup>2</sup> The expansion extended coverage to thousands of residents who were previously uninsured. A Group VIII 1115 Demonstration Waiver would target many of the enrollees who gained coverage under the ACA expansion, leaving thousands of Ohioans unable to get the care they have had.

If the proposed waiver were implemented, Group VIII enrollees would undergo eligibility reviews. This would result in over 61,000 Ohio residents losing their health coverage, according to ODM's own projection.<sup>3</sup> However, we fear the true number of Ohioans at risk of losing coverage could yet be far higher. For example, based upon an analysis of publicly available data on Ohioans' employment status and health coverage, the Center for Community Solutions estimates up to 450,000 Ohioans could be at risk of losing coverage.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Ohio Department of Medicaid, the Group VIII 1115 Demonstration Waiver aims to:

1. Promote economic stability and financial independence
2. Improve health outcomes by encouraging individuals to be engaged with their health and healthcare.

Although the Ohio Department of Medicaid asserts its commitment to assisting individuals in meeting compliance requirements, this policy presents a significant risk to an already imperfect healthcare system. By limiting pathways to access, you risk undermining the true purpose of Medicaid – to provide health coverage to income individuals and families.

A significant portion of Medicaid recipients are either actively employed or unable to work due to health limitations, caregiving obligations, or other substantial barriers.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, health care is often a necessary and

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<sup>1</sup><https://files.kff.org/attachment/fact-sheet-medicaid-state-OH>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.healthinsurance.org/medicaid/ohio>

<sup>3</sup>[https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/medicaid.ohio.gov/About%20Us/PublicNotices/Group\\_VIII\\_Demonstration\\_Revised\\_Public\\_Notice.pdf](https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/medicaid.ohio.gov/About%20Us/PublicNotices/Group_VIII_Demonstration_Revised_Public_Notice.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><https://www.communitysolutions.com/resources/ohio-medicaid-work-requirement-lose-healthcare-coverage>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/understanding-the-intersection-of-medicaid-and-work-an-update/>

vital precursor to find and maintain employment. In fact, a vast majority of Group VIII enrollees reported to ODM that Medicaid made it easier to work and to look for work.<sup>6</sup>

Stringent requirements will only lead to coverage loss for people who need healthcare the most but also increase hardship for those already struggling to make ends meet. Further, work requirements will increase administrative and reporting burdens on ODM, shunting already limited resources away from providing quality care to recipients.<sup>7</sup>

Every American deserves access to affordable and quality health services. We encourage you to reconsider the State's Group VIII 1115 Demonstration Waiver request and instead focus on solutions that holistically support working families and those in need.

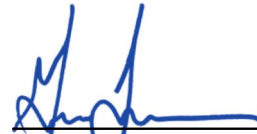
Sincerely,



Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



Emilia Strong Sykes  
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

<sup>6</sup> <https://medicaid.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/2468a404-5b09-4b85-85cd-4473a1ec8758/Group-VIII-Final-Report.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-enrollees-and-work-requirements-lessons-from-the-tanf-experience/>