

DEFEND **AMERICA**
ACTION

MAINE REPORT · SEPTEMBER 2026

Health Care in *Crisis*

*Trump and Republicans are making
health care unaffordable for Mainers.*

A MAINE REPORT • SEPTEMBER 2026

Trump promised “better health care at a much lower cost.” In Maine, families are *losing coverage at breakneck speed.*

In February, Donald Trump stood before Congress and promised Americans that his new health care plan would deliver “better health care at a much lower cost.” Today, health care costs have gone through the roof in Maine thanks to the health care crisis that Trump and Republicans in Congress created when they cut nearly \$1 trillion from Medicaid and let the ACA tax credits that helped 54,000 Mainers afford coverage expire.

Trump promised to bring health care costs down, yet his law is stripping \$2.7 billion in federal Medicaid funding from Maine over the next decade, threatens coverage for as many as 31,000 Mainers once work reporting requirements take effect, and has already left roughly 23,000 fewer Mainers covered through Medicaid/CHIP and the ACA marketplace. Working families, children, seniors, and small business owners across the state are losing coverage at breakneck speed and paying more than ever for health care. Many Mainers who chose to keep their ACA coverage were pushed into bare-bones plans carrying huge deductibles after Trump and the GOP left them facing a projected average premium increase of 81 percent. Meanwhile, Maine seniors are paying more for prescription drugs after Trump shielded big drug companies and ended a program holding down Medicare drug plan premiums – and all while Trump and his billionaire buddies cash in on some of the biggest tax breaks in history.

— BY THE NUMBERS

Maine's health care affordability crisis, in figures.

54,000

Mainers who relied on enhanced ACA tax credits – facing an 81% projected average premium increase for 2026.

Maine Center for Economic Policy

31,000

Mainers who could lose Medicaid in the first year of Trump-GOP work reporting requirements alone.

Maine DHHS

23,000+

Mainers who have already lost Medicaid/CHIP or ACA coverage since the Trump-GOP cuts passed.

Georgetown CCF • KFF

\$2.7B

Federal Medicaid funding Maine will lose over the next decade under the Trump-GOP law.

Maine Center for Economic Policy

\$1.5B

Maine hospitals alone stand to lose over the next decade due to GOP Medicaid cuts.

State Health & Value Strategies

7 in 10

Mainers who delayed or went without health care because of cost in the past year – 82% worry about future affordability.

Healthcare Value Hub

19

Maine hospitals, wards, and clinics closed, cutting services, or at risk of closure since the Trump-GOP cuts passed.

Protect Our Care • Hospital Crisis Watch

137,000+

Maine children covered by Medicaid and CHIP – about 4 in 10 of everyone enrolled in the state.

Medicaid.gov

SECTION 01 · CONCERN

Mainers are deeply concerned about *rising health care costs*.

Health care affordability is a top issue for Maine families.

A recent statewide survey [found](#) that 72 percent of Mainers have experienced at least one health care affordability burden in the past year, and 70 percent have delayed or gone without care because of the cost. Nationally, health care costs [top the list](#) of what Americans worry about affording, with nearly two-thirds of the public worried about paying for health insurance and out-of-pocket costs. 80 percent of returning ACA enrollees [say](#) their 2026 costs are higher, and 55 percent are cutting back on food or basic household items just to afford health care.

“*7 in 10 Mainers delayed or went without health care because of the cost in the past year. 82% worry about affording care in the future.*”

— HEALTHCARE VALUE HUB · MAINE

Mainers wanted Trump and Republicans in Congress to extend ACA tax credits.

Maine health officials [warned](#) that letting the enhanced credits expire would raise premiums by an average of 77 percent for Maine ACA enrollees who kept their plans, and by 120 percent for households earning more than 400 percent of the poverty level, but Trump and Republicans refused to act. A recent KFF Health Tracking Poll [found](#) 67 percent of Americans say Congress did the “wrong thing” by not extending the credits. As many as [1 in 4 people](#) enrolled in ACA coverage said they were “very likely” to go without insurance in 2026 if premiums more than doubled.

SECTION 02 · MEDICAID & ACA CUTS

Trump and the GOP cut Medicaid and the ACA for *working Mainers*.

— *Trump and Republicans enacted the largest Medicaid cuts in the program's 60-year history.*

Last year, Trump and Republicans in Congress slashed over \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the ACA, imposing sweeping Medicaid work reporting requirements, mandating eligibility renewals every six months, and sharply restricting how states like Maine fund Medicaid. More than 78,000 Mainers in the state's Medicaid expansion group could be subject to the new requirements, including 8.6 percent of everyone living in Washington County. Medicaid covers about half of Maine children, about two-thirds of nursing home residents, and nearly half of all births in the state. State officials estimate as many as 31,000 Mainers could lose coverage in the first year of the requirements, with many expected to be cut off over verification paperwork.

— *Maine kids rely on health care programs Trump and the GOP gutted.*

More than 137,000 Maine children are covered by Medicaid and CHIP, about 4 in 10 of everyone enrolled in the state, and 3,000 Maine children have already lost Medicaid since Trump signed the law, leaving Maine's kids disproportionately exposed to Trump and the GOP's massive cuts to health care.

SECTION 02 · CONTINUED

Premiums *spiked*. Over 23,000 already lost coverage.

Premiums spiked after Republicans killed ACA tax credits.

After Trump and Republicans refused to extend critical ACA tax credits, the 54,000 Mainers receiving them (85 percent of everyone enrolled through the state's ACA marketplace) faced a projected average premium increase of 81 percent to keep their plans for 2026. A 60-year-old couple in Maine making \$85,000 a year, for example, faced a \$28,860 increase in their annual ACA premium costs to hit \$36,085 – which amounts to more than \$3,000 a month. To keep premiums within reach, many Mainers were pushed into accepting worse coverage with higher deductibles. Enrollment in these plans is now nearly 60 percent of the state's total ACA enrollment, and the most popular plan carries an \$8,000 deductible for individuals and \$16,000 for families. The damage is compounding, with regulators approving another double-digit rate increase on average for 2027.

“
\$36,085 a year – more than \$3,000 a month
– for one Maine couple's ACA coverage after
Trump-GOP ripped away the tax credits.

– CENTER ON BUDGET & POLICY PRIORITIES

Over 23,000 Mainers have already lost the health care coverage they relied on.

Since the passage of Trump and Republicans' massive health care cuts, 23,000 fewer Mainers are covered through Medicaid/CHIP and the ACA marketplace.

Over 15,000 lost Medicaid/CHIP.

As of June 2026, 15,605 Mainers – including thousands of children – have lost their Medicaid or CHIP coverage they relied on to access health care since Trump and Republicans gutted health care.

— *Thousands fewer Maine ACA enrollees.*

ACA enrollment in Maine has dropped by over 7,500 this year, a 12 percent decline and the lowest enrollment since Maine launched its state-based marketplace. During open enrollment, nearly a third of Mainers who canceled their marketplace coverage said they could no longer afford the monthly premium.

— *Maine's uninsured ranks are set to grow.*

Maine's uninsured rate fell to 5.5 percent in 2024 thanks to Medicaid expansion and ACA tax credits, but KFF projects the Trump-GOP Medicaid cuts alone will leave 33,000 more Mainers uninsured. State marketplace officials warn that some Mainers will drain their savings and retirement accounts to keep paying premiums while others go without coverage entirely.

— *Local small businesses are losing health care.*

15,400 Maine small business owners and self-employed workers rely on the ACA for coverage, nearly one in four marketplace enrollees in the state. 87 percent of small business owners wanted Congress to permanently extend ACA tax credits.

SECTION 03 · HOSPITALS

Maine hospitals are *closing* & rural health care is at risk.

— *Trump-GOP cuts are sucking billions out of Maine's health care system.*

Thanks to the Trump-GOP law, Maine is bracing for a \$2.7 billion cut in federal Medicaid funding over the next decade, hitting doctors, nurses, and the small-town economies that depend on them. Maine hospitals alone are also expected to lose \$1.5 billion over the next decade due to GOP Medicaid cuts. Northern Light Health, which runs nine hospitals across the state, expects to lose about \$27 million in the first year of the cuts alone, and roughly 40 percent of Maine's hospitals were already losing money before the cuts took hold.

SECTION 03 • HOSPITAL CRISIS WATCH

19 Maine hospitals and clinics *already closed*, cutting services, or at risk.

As of late September 2026, Protect Our Care's Hospital Crisis Watch has found 19 health care facilities in Maine that have already been severely impacted since Trump and the GOP passed their cuts to health care last July:

AT-RISK

Alfond Center for Health • Maine Medical Center • Northern Light AR Gould Hospital • Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center • Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital

**CUTS
ANNOUNCED**

Central Maine Healthcare • Northern Maine General

**CLOSURE
ANNOUNCED**

MaineGeneral Eye Center • MaineHealth Lincoln Hospital – Labor & Delivery

CLOSED

Aurora Healthcare • Central Maine Healthcare – Manchester Care Center • Central Maine Healthcare Gray Family Health Center • Downeast Community Partners – Maternal and Child Health program • Downeast OB-GYN • Maine Family Planning and Health Imperatives – Primary Care • Mount Desert Island Hospital OB Unit • Northern Light Health – Walk-in Clinic Bangor • Northern Light Health – Walk-in Clinic Waterville • Northern Light Health Primary Care – Castine

SECTION 03 • RURAL MAINE

Rural Maine hospitals are *most at-risk*.

Rural Maine hospitals are most at-risk.

The Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform identified 10 of Maine's 24 rural hospitals, 42 percent, as at risk of closing. The Maine Center for Economic Policy flagged Calais Community Hospital, Cary Medical Center, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital, and Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital as especially vulnerable to the Medicaid cuts, and the closure of the two Aroostook County hospitals alone would wipe out \$113.6 million in wages. Rural Maine is already losing care, with almost half of the state's birthing centers closed since 2015 and expecting mothers forced onto long drives to deliver.

Trump's pity rural health fund won't cover his massive cuts to Maine's rural health care infrastructure.

In response to concerns about cuts to Medicaid, the Trump administration doled out a \$190 million first-year rural health grant to Maine. Only a small slice of the money can reimburse providers for lost revenue, so Maine providers face \$2.7 billion in cuts while receiving about \$171 million in reimbursement, a net loss of \$2.5 billion. The grant also offers no guarantees that the money will go to the hospitals that need it the most.

SECTION 04 · OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

Out-of-pocket costs are rising in Maine – despite *Trump's promises*.

— *Trump is protecting Big Pharma's profits while Maine seniors pay more.*

While Trump has [publicly declared](#) that drug prices are dropping, his health care cuts carved out an [expanded orphan drug exemption](#) shielding nearly one-third of high-priced drugs from the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program passed by President Biden and Democrats in Congress. The carve-out gives Big Pharma [\\$8.8 billion over 10 years](#) at the expense of taxpayers and seniors, raising out-of-pocket costs for Maine's [more than 300,000](#) prescription drug beneficiaries on Medicare. Meanwhile, Medicare premiums [rose](#) to \$202.90 a month in 2026 (up \$17.90), and the annual deductible rose to \$283. Last year, monthly out-of-pocket costs for brand-name drugs under Medicare Part D [jumped 26 percent](#) to \$108 a month.

— *Trump killed a program that keeps seniors' Medicare drug coverage affordable.*

In July, the Wall Street Journal [revealed](#) that the Trump administration is [ending](#) a Medicare Part D subsidy program that holds down premiums for seniors' prescription drug coverage, starting in 2027. On top of the Big Pharma carve-outs and nearly \$1 trillion in Medicaid cuts, ending the program means [“countless seniors will soon pay more”](#) just to keep the drug coverage they rely on for life-saving medications. This is a direct hit to Maine, which has the [largest share](#) of residents on Medicare of any state, and to older Mainers living on fixed incomes, for whom even a small premium hike can force a choice between prescriptions, groceries, and the heating bill.

— *688 drug prices have gone up since Trump took office.*

A September 2025 [Senate HELP Committee report](#) found that 688 prescription drugs have increased in price since Trump took office, with a median increase of 5.5 percent and 25 drugs more than doubling. Of the 17 pharmaceutical companies Trump personally asked to lower prices, [15 raised prices regardless](#). The companies that signed deals with Trump also [made huge profits](#) during the first full year of Trump's second term, raking in a combined \$177 billion in profits, an [explosive 66 percent increase](#) in profits from 2024.

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION • SEPTEMBER 2026

Maine families are losing coverage. It's time to fight back.

Defend America Action is a 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to defending working families from the destructive policies of the Trump administration and Congressional Republicans.

Every figure and citation in this report links to its source – from KFF and the Maine Center for Economic Policy to Protect Our Care's Hospital Crisis Watch, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and Maine's independent newsrooms.

DefendAmericaAction.org

© 2026 DEFEND AMERICA ACTION