



GO! BULLETIN



National News

ACTION ALERT

NATIONAL ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK!

In Washington DC, Congress is taking its first recess of the session. Some of our US Congressmen and women are headed to Oregon to host town hall meetings. They want to hear from you about how Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act help you live and work in your community.

YOUR STORY MATTERS!

When asked why Oregonians should advocate to stop Affordable Care Act repeal and Medicaid restructure US Senator Jeff Merkley said:

"By debating the repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Senate is putting the lives and livelihoods of over 20 million Americans in jeopardy. The most powerful way to fight this destructive effort is by sharing stories of the personal impact. I encourage Oregonians with disabilities, and all Oregonians, to share your story of exactly how a repeal of the ACA would affect you."

Senator Merkley also said, "I will take your story with me to Washington and fuel the resistance against repealing the ACA. Those who want to take us back to the days of health care for the healthy and the wealthy are feeling the heat, and that heat makes a difference."

Why do we care about Medicaid?

As noted in our previous National GO! Bulletins, Medicaid is a state and federal partnership that funds DD services. The Affordable Care Act brought the Community First Choice (K Plan) to Oregon's Medicaid DD services. It also removed pre-existing condition exclusions and lifetime caps on how much medical insurance can pay for you.

Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act have helped 25,000 Oregonians with I/DD! Also, the K Plan is an entitlement service. This means if you are eligible for the K Plan and need a K Plan service, you get the service in a timely manner. If the K Plan goes away, the entitlement for DD services would also go away. This would take us back to the days of capped waiver services where Oregon could limit the number of people who get DD Services and how many services they get. People may have to be on wait lists before they get services. This would be a step backward for Oregon.

Why should you talk about Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act with our US Congressmen?

Although nothing is final, but Congress is talking about repealing the Affordable Care Act and restructuring Medicaid to "save federal dollars". This means they plan to have less federal dollars moving to states to pay for Medicaid services. If there is less federal money for Medicaid, Oregon will have to pay more to keep services at the levels they are today.

Oregon doesn't have extra funds to stabilize Medicaid services if the federal money goes down. We are currently facing a \$1.8 billion shortfall in our 2017-2019 budget. With less money in the Medicaid system, Oregon will have to look at options that will make it harder for people to use Medicaid to be part of their community, like:

- Starting wait lists for services. In the past, Oregonians with IDD had to wait years to get services. This made it hard for people to have supports to live and work in community.
- Reducing provider rates. These rates are low today. Making them lower could mean providers stop serving people who use Medicaid.
- Reducing how many people can access services. This would leave people out who need and use services today.
- Reducing how many services people can get by putting caps on services.

How do I share my story in writing or at town hall meetings?

Introduce yourself and which city you live in.

Start with values: Oregon is strongest when all people are active members of their community. Thousands of Oregonians depend on Medicaid to live and work in their community.

Answer each question in one to two sentences to keep it brief:

- How do your Medicaid services (including the K Plan services) help you live and work as a community member?
- What would happen to you if you didn't have those services?



What can you expect at a town hall meeting?

Senator Ron Wyden had a packed house of thousands at Oregon City High School on Saturday, February 18th. He talked about many topics from possible investigations into the current administration's relationship to Russia, women's rights, education policies and priorities, health care and programs for seniors, the Environmental Protection Agency, privacy rights, religious freedoms, elimination of the electoral college and the status of current requests for disaster aid for Oregon and California given recent storms.

A large number of people at the town hall raised their hands as "first timers," and Wyden noted he was "thrilled that people are getting involved in policies and issues that have never been involved before!" **US Senator Wyden said that he felt strongly that political change comes from the bottom up, and he encouraged people to continue to be active (marching, emailing, making phone calls) for the political change they seek.**

Interested in attending a town hall? Read below to find one near you!

Senator Wyden will host the following additional town hall events:

02/20 LaSells Stewart Center Auditorium at OSU in Corvallis, 11:00 AM

02/20 Sisters High School Auditorium in Sisters, 5:30 PM

02/21 Crook County High School Auditorium in Prineville, 12:30 PM

02/22 Madras Performing Arts Center in Madras, 10:00 AM

02/23 Ashland High School Gym in Ashland, 9:45 AM

02/24 Astoria High School Auditorium in Astoria, 11:30 AM

02/25 David Douglas High School in Portland, 12:00 PM

Representative Kurt Schrader will host the following town hall events:

02/21 Alder Creek Middle School in Milwaukee, 6:00 PM

02/22 North Salem High School, Salem, 6:00 PM

Can't attend a town hall? Please contact your US Congressmen and women by phone, email or by regular mail.

US Senators:

US Senator RON WYDEN

Representing the State of Oregon

Access contact information online at <http://wyden.senate.gov>

US Senator JEFF MERKLEY

Representing the State of Oregon

Access contact information online at <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/>

ACA Story Page: <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/share-your-aca-story>

US Representatives:

SUZANNE BONAMICI - FIRST DISTRICT

Counties: Clatsop, Columbia, Washington, Yamhill and part of Multnomah

Access contact information online at <https://bonamici.house.gov>

GREG WALDEN - SECOND DISTRICT

Counties: Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jackson, Jefferson, Grants Pass area of Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco and Wheeler

Access contact information online at <https://walden.house.gov>

EARL BLUMENAUER - THIRD DISTRICT

Counties: Most of Multnomah and the northern part of Clackamas

Access contact information online at <https://blumenauer.house.gov>

Dedicated ACA Email Address: OR.03.MyACAStory@mail.house.gov

PETER DEFAZIO - FOURTH DISTRICT

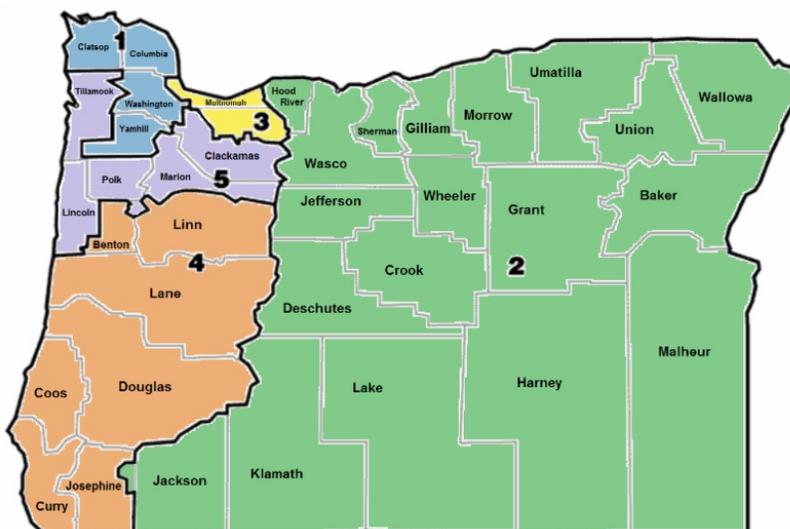
Counties: Coos, Curry, Douglas, Lane, Linn, and most of Benton and Josephine

Access contact information online at <https://defazio.house.gov>

KURT SCHRADER - FIFTH DISTRICT

Counties: Lincoln, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, parts of northern Benton, most of Clackamas and parts of SW Multnomah

Access contact information online at <https://schrader.house.gov>



Oregon's US Representatives District Map

Follow our guide below to write your US Senators and Representatives:



ACTION ALERT

WRITE YOUR U.S. LEGISLATORS

Share how Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) help you be a community member!
Even if you called your legislator's office, please write to them today!

WHAT IS AT STAKE?



Oregon is strongest when all people have supports to be community members

Medicaid and ACA changes may mean less services for people with disabilities to live and work in their community

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

-  **FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR**
You can find out how to contact your U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators at usa.gov/elected-officials
-  **TELL YOUR STORY!**
Tell your legislators who you are, how you use Medicaid and how cuts will impact your life.
-  **KEEP IT SHORT & DIRECT**
Keep it to one page. It should only take one or two minutes to read your letter outloud.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

|| My name is _____ and I am a constituent. I don't want changes to Medicaid and the ACA because I depend on these services everyday. ||

|| Because of Medicaid, I have health care and supports to live and work in my community. For example, I use my services to _____. ||

|| If I don't have these supports, my life will be harder because _____. Please don't change Medicaid or the ACA. ||



EMAIL ADDRESSES:

Your U.S. Senators:

senator_merkley@merkley.senate.gov

senator_wyden@wyden.senate.gov

Find your U.S. Representatives contact info at usa.gov/elected-officials



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