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Virginia Congressional and State Leaders Join Local Health Care Advocates to Oppose Republican Medicaid Cuts

Richmond, VA – Today, Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan (VA-04) and General Assembly Members Senator Ghazala Hashmi (SD-15) and Delegate Mark Sickles (HD-17) held a press conference highlighting the importance of Medicaid to the state budget, local health care systems and warning against Republicans' proposed cuts that would [kick 630,000 Virginians](#) off their health insurance.

U.S. House Republicans voted to advance a budget plan last month, [requiring drastic cuts to Medicaid](#), which constitutes more than half of Virginia's federal funding that currently provides health coverage to [1.8 million of the state's residents](#). As legislators gear up for a budget reconciliation fight in Congress, local Medicaid recipients, providers, and state legislators gathered at the General Assembly Building to fight back.

"Those proposing Medicaid cuts are misinforming us and telling folks that people who are receiving Medicaid are using the system, abusing the system and don't want to work when, in fact, a [large majority](#) of Medicaid recipients *do work*," **said community leader Aida Pacheco, advocating on her daughter's behalf**. "It's insulting, and I am angry to hear that my daughter is lazy and abusing the system — *my daughter is fighting for her life*. She has worked most of her life since she was 18 years old until she was diagnosed last year with breast cancer at 43 years of age. During chemotherapy, she tried to work part time until the effects were causing such fatigue and pain that she could no longer work."

"House Republicans claim they're not trying to cut Medicaid, yet the budget plan that they adopted, as the [CBO has made clear](#), can only be achieved with cuts to Medicaid," **said Congresswoman McClellan**. "Speaker Mike Johnson says that the people on Medicaid are 29 year olds, sitting in their moms' house playing video games. With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, that's a lie."

"The people on Medicaid are pregnant women and postpartum mothers, it's the sickest children and poor children, it's our seniors, it's their family members who sacrifice their own well being to take care of them, it's disabled individuals who are unable to work."

Members of the General Assembly Hashmi and Sickles warned about the serious implications for the state without this continued crucial funding that health care providers, nursing homes, and hospitals rely on to meet the needs of their communities and provide quality care.

“One of the most enjoyable parts of my job as a family doc is caring for kids and seeing them thrive,” **said Dr. Danielle Avula, a family physician at a local safety net clinic.**

“Children are the largest group of Medicaid beneficiaries in the United States. And all kids need the services that Medicaid provides...The data show that compared with uninsured kids, children with Medicaid miss less school, are more likely to graduate from high school, and grow into healthier adults. Pediatric patients are the future of Virginia, and we simply cannot close doors when it comes to their healthcare.”

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