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Young Kim should follow voters' will and vote no on drastic Medicaid cuts

By Eric Ball

As a physician, I know firsthand how essential Medicaid is for our community's health. It provides coverage to millions of Californians, including nearly 50% of the state's children and 50% of all births. It keeps our hospitals running, our clinics open, and our neighbors healthy. That is why physicians are urging Rep. Young Kim to uphold her [pledge](#) to "protect vital Medicaid services for the most vulnerable" from a budget that could include up to [\\$880 billion in cuts](#) to Medicaid – a disastrous outcome that would hurt patients and ultimately increase all our health care costs.

Medicaid is not just any government program. It is a vital lifeline for more than 15 million Californians – more than a third of the state population – who rely on the program for access to health care. In fact, the number of Californians who depend on Medicaid [exceeds](#) the *entire populations* of all but three U.S. states.

Making these draconian cuts to Medicaid would go against the will and interests of Rep. Kim's constituents and Californians writ large. During the 2024 General Election, nearly two-thirds of voters in Kim's district and statewide [overwhelmingly supported](#) increasing funding for Medi-Cal, (California's Medicaid program). The support of Medicaid is nonpartisan – both the California Democratic Party and the California Republican Party endorsed Prop 35 and national polling has [consistently shown](#) that majorities in both parties, as well as independents, have favorable views of Medicaid, and [three in four Americans](#) support the program.

Despite this widespread support, House Republicans have adopted a budget blueprint that would gut this vital program. The argument they make is that slashing Medicaid will reduce spending, but the reality is that these cuts won't make health care costs disappear. They will simply [shift the burden](#) onto states, hospitals, and patients – including those with employer sponsored plans. Without coverage, millions of people will forgo preventative care and instead turn to emergency rooms, where the costs for treatment will be significantly higher and their health conditions significantly worse. This not only raises health care costs for everyone; it also leads to longer wait times and overcrowding in our emergency departments.

Medicaid funds hospitals and community health centers, which provide care to low-income families; funds nursing and home health services for seniors; helps disabled residents get the care they need while continuing to live independently; and provides essential services to children. Stripping away Medicaid dollars would cruelly deprive these Californians of essential

services and result in significant economic impacts to our region as health care facilities close and jobs are lost.

After voting for the House budget resolution, Rep. Kim [stated](#) that she “understand[s] how important Medicaid is for many in our community to access health care services” and pledged to vote against a budget that does not protect Medicaid. I hope that will be the case, because Californians have made clear where we stand. We value Medicaid and the essential services it provides. Congress should listen and reject a budget that would result in harmful cuts.

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