

**MEDIA ADVISORY****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

Anthony Hill  
470-654-5484, [ahill@healthyfuturega.org](mailto:ahill@healthyfuturega.org)

**PRESS RELEASE: Georgia Experts Warn New Federal Budget Law Will  
Harm Families' Health and Food Security**

**ATLANTA, GA** — Georgia health care and policy experts warned this week that the newly signed federal budget law threatens the health and well-being of families across the state, putting both health care access and food security at risk.

During a [press briefing](#) jointly hosted by Georgians for a Healthy Future, the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, and the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), speakers outlined how the law's deep cuts to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), along with stricter work requirements, will undo progress Georgia has made in expanding health coverage and reducing food insecurity.

Every Georgian deserves the freedom to see a doctor when they are sick and put healthy food on the table for their family. But experts warned that the new law undermines this basic promise. The cuts and requirements are expected to leave more Georgians uninsured, drive up health care costs, increase food hardship, and strain hospitals, early childhood programs, and safety-net providers.

Speakers called on state leaders to use Georgia's resources wisely to protect families from falling through the cracks and to ensure no one is forced to choose between paying for medical care and buying groceries.

[Whitney Griggs](#), Director of Health Policy at Georgians for a Healthy Future, explained how the changes to the Affordable Care Act will lead to more uninsured Georgians, higher costs, and added strain on hospitals.

*"Georgia Access enrolled more than 1.5 million people in 2025, second only to California, because plans are affordable and enrollment is simple," said Griggs. "With over 90 percent of enrollees relying on subsidies, the budget bill's ACA changes could strip coverage from up to 700,000 Georgians unless state leaders act."*

[Leah Chan](#), Director of Health Justice at the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, focused on the economic consequences of shifting costs from the federal government to states at a time when families and health systems are already under pressure.

*"Medicaid helps millions of Georgians see the doctor, keeps our rural hospitals and nursing homes open, creates good-paying jobs, and contributes billions in federal dollars to our state budget," said Chan. "This new law puts restrictions on how Georgia finances Medicaid benefits and limits the state's ability to stabilize rural hospitals and support healthcare workforce needs. It is critical that state lawmakers use all the tools at their disposal to keep Georgians covered and prevent harm to our rural and safety net providers."*

[Ife Finch Floyd](#), Director of Economic Justice at the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, highlighted how SNAP cuts and expanded work requirements will worsen food insecurity, particularly for children, older adults, and rural families.

*"The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is one of the most effective and efficient anti-hunger programs in the country," said Floyd. "The unprecedented changes to SNAP in the tax and spending law create a risk of increased food insecurity for Georgians and negative impacts on local economies, especially in rural areas."*

[Callan Wells](#), Senior Health Policy Manager at GEEARS, warned of the negative impact on young children and early childhood programs, which depend on stable access to health care and nutrition for healthy development.

*"It takes a village to raise a child, but who will care for that village? This bill has far reaching implications for children, not just because it could harm them directly, but also because children live in families and communities," said Wells. "Children rely on the adults around them, parents, teachers, neighbors, extended family to keep them safe, healthy, and fed. We urge Georgia's lawmakers to keep children at the center of this conversation and protect Medicaid, Georgia Access, and SNAP - programs that help our state thrive."*

Our state leaders have a responsibility to protect the health and well-being of Georgians. That means making smart use of Georgia's resources to keep people insured, support access to nutritious food, and prevent more of our neighbors from falling through the cracks.

We urge Georgia leaders to explore every option available to protect people's health, keep families insured, and ensure no one has to choose between basic needs like food and medical care.

A full recording of the press briefing is available here: [https://youtu.be/wo2Plp\\_QvEE](https://youtu.be/wo2Plp_QvEE)

## FACT SHEET: KEY DATA AND BACKGROUND

### Georgia Access Coverage

- In 2025, Georgia Access enrolled over **1.5 million Georgians**, second only to California among state-run marketplaces.
- More than **90% of Georgia Access enrollees receive financial assistance** to lower their monthly premium.
- Over half of enrollees pay **less than \$10 a month** for private health coverage.
- Most Georgia Access enrollees were **automatically renewed** in their plans, keeping coverage simple and stable.
- Cuts to Affordable Care Act funding in the federal budget law could result in an **estimated 700,000 Georgians losing coverage in 2026** without state action.

### SNAP and Food Security

- **1.4 million Georgians rely on SNAP** to afford the cost of food (data from GA DHS/DFCS)
- **SNAP issued about \$3 billion in food assistance in 2024** (data from GA DHS/DFCS); recipients used those benefits in [nearly 10,000](#) SNAP retailers across the state
- [Rural areas and small towns](#) are more likely to use SNAP than larger metropolitan areas.
- In 2023, [14.9%](#) of Georgians were food insecure. That figure would be higher if it wasn't for SNAP. **SNAP reduces food insecurity by 30%.**
- Based on current funding, a 5% cost share would be about [\\$162 million](#) for Georgia

**For full citations, additional data, or to schedule interviews with any of the experts, contact Anthony Hill at 470-654-5484 or [ahill@healthyfuturega.org](mailto:ahill@healthyfuturega.org).**

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**Georgians for a Healthy Future** collaborates with communities and partners to lead policy change that advances health equity for all Georgians. Our vision is of a day in which all Georgians have equitable opportunities to achieve their highest level of health. We do this by delivering actionable health policy information to policymakers and advocates; providing resources to help consumers become strong advocates, and elevating the consumer experience to inform policy change. Read more at [healthyfuturega.org](https://healthyfuturega.org)

**Georgia Budget and Policy Institute** The Georgia Budget and Policy Institute is a research and advocacy organization that advances lasting solutions to expand economic opportunity and well-being for all Georgians. We examine the state's budget, taxes and public policies to provide thoughtful analysis and responsible solutions that address inequities in our state. We educate the public about complex issues confronting Georgia. We activate Georgians to call for policy solutions that put people first. We aim to inspire informed debate and decision-making, advancing our vision of a fair and inclusive Georgia where everyone can prosper. Read more at [gbpi.org](https://gbpi.org)

**GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students** [GEEARS](https://www.geears.org) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that leads the statewide movement for quality early learning and healthy development for all children aged birth through five. Established in 2010, GEEARS' mission is to ensure that Georgia's children thrive by championing research-backed policies and investments, fostering collaboration, and advancing public will. For more information, visit [www.geears.org](https://www.geears.org).

#### GEORGIANS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

50 Hurt Plaza SE, Suite 1130  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
Phone: 404 567 5016  
Fax: 404 935 988

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