



Keep Maine Children & Families Healthy

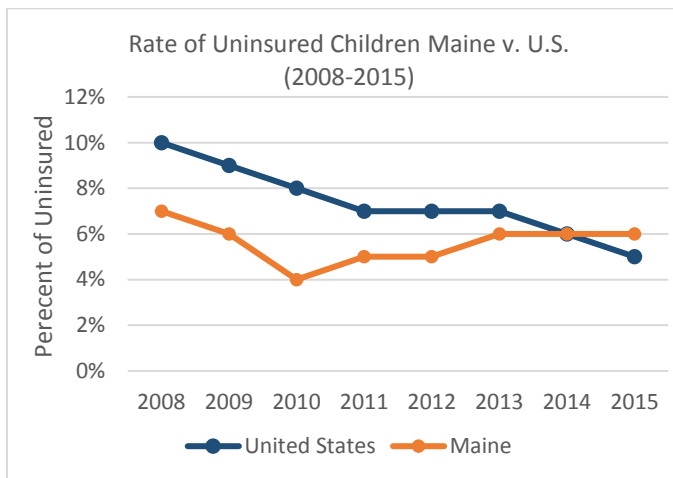
HOW THE SENATE HEALTH CARE BILL HARMS MAINE CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION

With quality health care coverage, Maine children and families can access the health care they need to become active and vibrant participants in our state, communities and economy. However, the new senate health care bill, threatens the health and well-being of all Mainers, especially children, seniors and individuals with disabilities. It overhauls the Medicaid program, weakens essential health benefits/patient protection, and leaves more Mainers without health insurance.

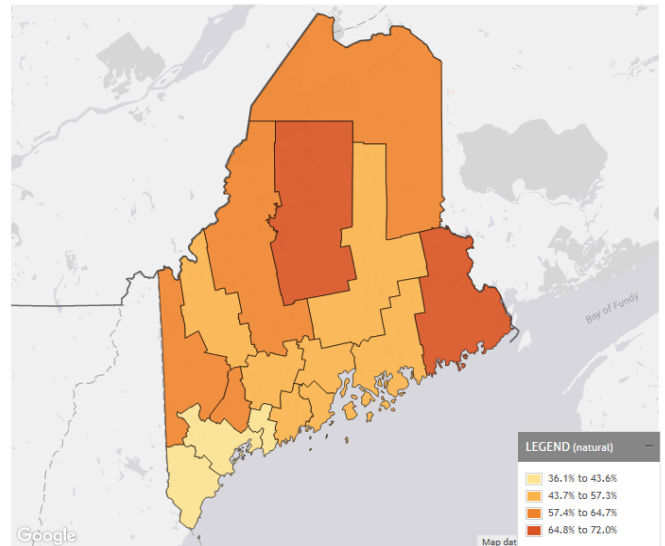
THE STATE OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE COVERAGE IN MAINE

When Maine children have health care coverage, they can get the preventive care they need to thrive. They can see a doctor when they are sick or injured, get annual checks and are more likely to have positive long-term health outcomes. While rates of uninsured children have declined across the country, Maine's children have not seen these results.



Data Source: The KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

According to the latest National KIDS COUNT Data, Maine was one of seven states to not see any improvement in rates in rates of uninsured children. **In fact, Maine was one of only two states to actually see fewer children covered than in 2010.** The data shows we should be increasing access to health care coverage in Maine, not reducing it.



CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN MAINECARE BY AGE GROUP: TOTAL AGE 18 AND UNDER (PERCENT) - 2016

Maine Children's Alliance
KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

WHY MEDICAID IS IMPORTANT FOR MAINE

MaineCare, Maine's Medicaid/CHIP program, ensures children from low-income households, with disabilities or with complex medical conditions can get the health care they need to thrive.

- *Over 130,000 Maine children—47.6 percent—rely on MaineCare for health care coverage.* Because of MaineCare, children from low-income households can get preventive care so they can stay healthy. This means they miss fewer days of school and their parents miss fewer days of work.
- *MaineCare provides critical coverage for children with disabilities or complex medical needs.* Most private insurance plans do not cover the expensive but essential services for these children and families. MaineCare ensures these kids get the care they need without putting their family in financial ruin.
- *Almost half of all births in 2015 were financed by MaineCare.* When expectant mothers get the health care they need, Maine children have a strong, healthy start to life. MaineCare ensures that our kids can access quality health care from the early years into young adulthood, beginning expectant mothers and prenatal care.



Keep Maine Children & Families Healthy

HOW THE SENATE HEALTH CARE BILL HARMS MAINE CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

"A common story that I hear is: We got dropped off MaineCare, so we are behind on our check-ups, and our vaccinations. We have had nowhere to go for care other than the emergency room."

-Dr. Joseph Anderson, Belfast Pediatrician

MEDICAID AND RURAL HEALTH

Cuts to Medicaid funding will already disproportionately affect children and families living in more rural parts of Maine. A recent report found that more rural residents access health care through MaineCare than non-rural residents.

These cuts also pose serious threats to rural hospitals, which rely on Medicaid funding to provide critical health care services. As more Maine children and families in rural areas lose health insurance, they will be forced to access critical care in hospitals, driving up the rates of uncompensated care. This will likely be a fatal cost burden on already struggling rural hospitals, which would adversely affect the health in the region and the economy.

HOW THE SENATE HEALTH CARE BILL HARMS MAINE KIDS

Cutting Medicaid Funding

- Cutting funds to Medicaid means Maine would be forced to serve fewer children and families through MaineCare, increasing Maine's rate of uninsured children.
- The bill imposes a per capita cap on the entire Medicaid program that is significantly tighter in the final year – 2025 – set at CPI-U (or regular inflation) rather than medical inflation, which always runs higher. This means long-term permanent cuts in Medicaid's future if this bill passes.

- Per capita caps also limit the state's ability to respond to public health crises, like the Swine Flu or Zika outbreak, and recessions.
- While the Senate bill excludes from the cap children who are disabled, if Maine is unable to free up state resources to spend on services for "medically complex" children, this exemption from the cap is meaningless.

Other Harmful Provisions

- The Senate bill offers states a waiver to offer plans that are not comprehensive and are not required to cover pre-existing conditions or essential health care benefits, which include maternity care, mental health care etc.
- With rising infant mortality rates, Maine ought to provide more expectant mothers with quality, health care.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Oppose any bill that changes the structure of Medicaid funding (i.e. per capita caps and block grants).
- ✓ Oppose any bill that provides the opportunity for states to waive coverage of essential health benefits.
- ✓ Oppose any bill that results in fewer Mainers with health care coverage than under the ACA.

REFERENCES:

1. KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
2. Vernon K. Smith, Kathleen Gifford, Eileen Ellis, and Barbara Edwards, Health Management Associates; and Robin Rudowitz, Elizabeth Hinton, Larisa Antonisse and Allison Valentine, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. [Implementing Coverage and Payment Initiatives: Results from a 50-State Medicaid Budget Survey for State Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017](#), The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, October 2016.
3. Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, and University of North Carolina NC Rural Health Research Project. *MEDICAID in Small Towns and Rural America: A Life line for Children, Families, and Communities*. June 2017.