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Advocates Launch Health Justice NOW Campaign

Advocacy groups respond to federal health care cuts, outline solutions to protect coverage.

Hartford, CT (February 11, 2026) – Health advocates across Connecticut gathered at the Capitol Tuesday to launch the Health Justice NOW campaign, a statewide effort aimed at protecting health coverage and expanding access to affordable care amid sweeping federal cuts that threaten thousands of state residents.

The campaign seeks to safeguard health coverage, reduce out-of-pocket costs, and ensure every Connecticut resident can receive quality, affordable care without barriers or fear, regardless of income and where they were born.

“For every dollar that is spent on prevention, we save four dollars in the cost of healthcare. We recognize that if we provide preventive healthcare, the entire cost is going to come down for everyone.” **said Sen. Saud Anwar, Senate Chair of the Public Health Committee and Deputy President Pro Tempore.** “This is a human made disaster, this is a failed policy. The state of Connecticut will have to intervene. ”

The Health Justice NOW campaign focuses on ensuring premiums and other out-of-pocket costs meet affordability standards, controlling provider rates to keep care within reach, and reducing the risk of medical debt for patients and families. The campaign also prioritizes comprehensive coverage of essential health benefits and identifying sustainable revenue sources to support these goals.

“We have heard some leaders say that Connecticut can not be asked to fill the gap left by the federal government,” **said Tom Swan, Executive Director of Connecticut Citizen Action**

Group. “We not only reject this austerity frame, we are calling on elected officials to commit to bolder action than we have seen previously.”

The campaign launch comes as Congress advances the policies laid out in H.R. 1, officially titled the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), which includes major tax changes and deep federal spending cuts, including significant restrictions on health coverage programs. Among its health provisions, OBBBA removes full-scope Medicaid and CHIP eligibility for many lawfully present immigrants, including refugees, asylees, survivors of domestic violence, and survivors of human trafficking, beginning Oct. 1, 2026.

“Let me be clear: You can cut eligibility on paper, but you can’t cut cancer, trauma, or chronic illness. Trauma doesn’t wait until someone becomes a permanent resident,” **said Chris Altrock, Associate Director of Philanthropic Partnerships, Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants.** “This policy change does not reduce need. It shifts suffering out of sight and costs onto emergency rooms, schools, and communities. You can cut coverage, but you can’t cut illness. Connecticut now faces a choice.”

The Health Justice NOW campaign is led by Connecticut Citizen Action Group, Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut, HUSKY for Immigrants Coalition, Health Equity Solutions, and Connecticut for All, alongside other health advocacy organizations: AFT Connecticut, Connecticut Oral Health Initiative, Connecticut Voices for Children, Insulin for All Connecticut, Make the Road Connecticut, Nonprofit Accountability Group, Service Employees Union International 1199, She Leads Justice, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England and The Connecticut Project Action Fund.

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Additional Quotes:

- “President Trump and his allies have looted 1 trillion dollars from our Medicaid program in our country. When you take money away from healthcare you don’t get fewer sick people, people still need to go see a doctor,” **said Sen. Matt Lesser,** Senate Chair of the Human Services Committee.
- “Connecticut needs a clear plan to address the serious threat federal healthcare cuts pose to residents across the state. We stand in solidarity with our partners to advance solutions that mitigate coverage losses, and we expect our leaders to listen to, and act on, the needs of their constituents,” **said Katherine Villeda,** Coalition Director of the HUSKY for Immigrants coalition.
- “This campaign exists because we refuse to accept this health care crisis as inevitable. It is about solutions, fairness, and the courage to fix what we know is broken. Connecticut has the resources, the tools, and the talent to do this right. What we need now is the

political will to act quickly and in the best interests of low- and moderate-income families,” said **Kally Moquete**, Senior Manager of Policy, Health Equity Solutions.

- “It's become clear that the federal government wants to make this process more complicated, more confusing, and more likely to cause families to lose coverage. And when Medicaid gets harder to qualify for, or harder to keep, people don't just lose insurance. Families get pushed into crisis,” said **Dale Elliott**, PCA, member of SEIU 1199 New England.
- “After being diagnosed with a brain tumor, I lost my HUSKY health insurance and was cut off from the specialists and treatment I need to survive. For immigrant families, health coverage is not a luxury, it is the difference between getting care in time or too late, between living with dignity or living in fear. Our leaders must protect not only our health coverage but our communities,” said **Sebastian**, active member of Make The Road Connecticut.

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About the Health Justice NOW Campaign

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Coverage of the event on CT-N can be found [here](#).