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Protect Our Care: Rep. Moore & women leaders on importance of Medicaid for moms & kids

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Washington, DC – Today, Democratic Women's Caucus Communications Task Force Co-Chairs Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI-04) and Rep. Shontel Brown (D-OH-11) and President of the National Partnership for Women & Families Jocelyn Frye joined Protect Our Care for a press conference to discuss the ways Medicaid is a lifeline for women and children across the nation.

During the call, speakers discussed how Republicans in Congress are seeking deep cuts to Medicaid and proposing bureaucratic work reporting requirements. GOP leaders in 10 states have still failed to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, blocking millions of families from affordable coverage. Meanwhile, protections put into place by Congress to keep people enrolled in Medicaid during the pandemic expired on April 1. It is predicted that approximately 15 million people may lose their coverage due to the unwinding with those in non-expansion states being particularly vulnerable.

April marks the 5th annual Medicaid Awareness Month. A record 92 million Americans have enrolled in Medicaid. Adult women comprise an estimated 40 percent of those enrolled in Medicaid, and over half (54 percent) of children across the country are enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP. **Read Protect Our Care's fact sheet on how Medicaid helps women and children** here.

"I'm proud to serve as Chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus and what we do is pretty simple: we fight with everything we've got for women and families. Women want their families and their kids to be healthy, plain and simple—and that means protecting Medicaid," **said Democratic Women's Caucus Chair Lois Frankel**

(D-FL-22). “With Republicans in Congress seeking serious cuts to Medicaid that would be devastating for women, we’re fighting to protect and strengthen Medicaid for years to come. We’re fighting to make sure women can make their own health care decisions—without political interference. And the Democratic Women’s Caucus doesn’t back down.”

“As Republicans propose cruel and unnecessary work requirements for Medicaid, it’s so important that we stand up for this critical program and the millions of Americans it serves,” **said U.S. Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI-04), Democratic Women’s Caucus Communications Task Force Co-Chair.** “I am proud to join my colleagues and advocates in these efforts today and will continue championing Medicaid.”

“Medicaid is a crucial component to the health and welfare of women and children across the country,” **said U.S. Representative Shontel Brown (D-OH-11), Democratic Women’s Caucus Communications Task Force Co-Chair.** “Women of color consistently experience higher maternal mortality rates than white women primarily due to the intersection of multiple socio-economic factors, including generations of health inequities, and quite simply, institutional and structural racism. Expanding Medicaid and closing the coverage gap is a key element to improving maternal and reproductive health, especially for women of color.”

“As America’s crisis in maternal health worsens with each year, the importance of defending and expanding Medicaid is more urgent than ever,” **said Jocelyn Frye, President of the National Partnership for Women & Families.** “Medicaid is the largest source of reproductive health care in our country and strengthening its services is a key solution for addressing the maternal health crisis—which is especially severe among Black and Indigenous women. With reproductive freedom currently under attack throughout our nation, the National Partnership is proud to mark Medicaid Awareness Month by calling on policymakers at every level to make Medicaid available to every household who needs it.”

“When I was a college student at Lehigh University, I became ill in the winter of 2005. My illness dragged on and we didn’t really find a clear diagnosis for about eight to 10 years,” **said Kristin Volchansky, patient storyteller from Pennsylvania.** “The great thing about the Medicaid program is that it has protected my rights as a patient with an illness. I echo the concerns about work requirements. Work requirements are something that I know personally after

attempting to try to work part time when I was improving a couple of years ago. With the wages that I would have earned, there would have been a severe reduction in my benefits, or I would have been completely removed from the program."

"Medicaid provides people from all backgrounds affordable, quality coverage, and it is absolutely vital for promoting maternal and child health," **said Protect Our Care Communications Director Anne Shoup.** "We must continue to fight Republican attempts to undermine the program and work to expand Medicaid in the final 10 states to ensure women and their children can get the care they need and stay healthy."