

# Protect Our Care: U.S. Sen. Wyden celebrates health care victories ahead of the State of the Union address

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**Washington DC** — Today, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) joined patient advocates and Protect Our Care for a virtual press conference to discuss how Democrats have delivered the most important health care improvements since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), expanding affordable coverage, driving down prescription drug costs, strengthening Medicaid for moms and kids, and reducing inequities in care.

Last year, Democrats passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which lowered prescription drug and premium costs for millions of seniors and families. Just last week, the Biden administration announced that a record [16.3 million](#) people signed up for coverage under the Affordable Care Act marketplaces. Now, President Biden and Democrats in Congress are working to build on these health care gains and thwart GOP attempts to undermine progress and raise health care costs. **Read Protect Our Care's full 2023 agenda [here.](#)**

“We’ve been in a bunch of these battles over the years against Big Pharma. On the big issues like negotiating penalties for price gouging, out-of-pocket caps and more, Big Pharma always won. What happened on the floor of the United States Senate is the people beat Big Pharma, and Big Pharma is not happy about it,” **said U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR).** “Meanwhile, as part of this debt ceiling negotiation, we cannot let Medicare, Social Security and Medicaid be held hostage. You’re going to hear some Republicans starting tomorrow night claim they have no intention of touching Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Folks believe it when we see it

because when you look at what Speaker McCarthy said in order to win the speakership, it's pretty hard to do their budget balancing without making the changes in Social Security and Medicare, which would hurt a lot of people."

"I've been self-employed for the past 14 years, and during that time, I broke every bone in my right ankle falling down the stairs and tore my bicep muscle in another accident – both of which were not covered by my insurance. I now have a gold plan with a zero-dollar deductible for \$251 a month and I'm covered for any further accidents. If it wasn't for the Inflation Reduction Act, the premium would be \$600 a month and would be unaffordable," **said Randie Snow of Pittsburgh.** "If I could ask one thing of Congress, it would be to make sure that this subsidy enhancement is permanent, so that other freelancers and independent contractors like myself can afford real health care."

"When we age, our immune system changes, and we don't fight off things as we once did. In my case, it was stress that had brought shingles on. So after I was all healed, I went to get vaccinated and I was shocked at the cost of the copayment. Even though I had a great insurance program, it was still \$120," **said Linda Hamacher of Michigan.** "A lot of people need this immunization, but this is certainly one that the cost has really been prohibitive. Now, thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, this vaccine is free for seniors. These benefits are real. They're now. It's real help and it's real help right now."

"Democrats have a lot to celebrate at tomorrow's State of the Union address. Thanks to the work of health care champions like Senator Wyden, we have expanded affordable coverage, lowered prescription drug prices, and strengthened health care for moms, kids, and families," **said Protect Our Care Chair Leslie Dach.** "Whether it's a senior with diabetes taking insulin or a small business owner relying on ACA coverage, millions of Americans can sleep easier knowing they can afford the health care they need. At a time when Republicans have doubled down on their war on health care — by seeking cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, trying to repeal the ACA and the Inflation Reduction Act, and ripping away critical protections — it has never been more critical to remain focused on protecting health care access and putting the health and well-being of families first."

**Fact Sheet:** [Celebrating Health Care Achievements Ahead of the State of the Union](#)

From day one, President Biden has put the health and well-being of Americans first. Since taking office in 2020, President Biden and Congressional Democrats have

delivered the most expansive health care reform since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by passing the American Rescue Plan in 2021 and Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. This legislation provided essential relief during the COVID-19 pandemic, drove down drug prices, and extended premium savings for millions of American families. President Biden has also taken executive action to expand affordable coverage, stop surprise billing, strengthen maternal care, and reduce racial, rural, and other disparities in our health care system. As a result, ACA coverage is more affordable than ever before, and the uninsured rate is at an [all-time low](#).

### **By The Numbers**

- A record [16.3 million](#) Americans signed up for health care coverage on the ACA during the 2022-2023 open enrollment season.
- The uninsured rate is at an all-time low of [8 percent](#).
- [Over 91 million](#) people have health coverage through Medicaid or CHIP.
- 13 million Americans with health insurance from an ACA marketplace plan will save an average of \$2,400 per family on their premiums thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act.
- 49 million Medicare beneficiaries no longer face outrageous price hikes for prescription drugs.
- Seniors' out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs will be capped at \$2,000 per year beginning in 2025.
- Insulin copays are capped at \$35 per month for Medicare beneficiaries beginning in 2023.
- 80 of the most expensive prescription drugs will have lower prices because of Medicare negotiations by 2030.

Read the full fact sheet [here](#).