



**MICHAEL BENNET**  
U.S. SENATOR *for* COLORADO

## **The Stronger Medicaid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Act**

U.S. Senators Michael Bennet, Mazie K. Hirono, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, and Tina Smith

Over 77 million individuals are [enrolled](#) in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), providing essential coverage of health care services, like primary and preventive care, mental and behavioral health care, and chronic illness treatment, for over 20 percent of the United States population. Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, millions of people are unemployed, and they face significant uncertainty in the job market. For many, losing a job also means losing employer-sponsored health insurance coverage. Researchers estimated that [more than 10 million people](#) would lose employer-sponsored health insurance as a result of pandemic-related job loss in their household between April and December 2020. Just in the first three months of the pandemic, 5.4 million laid-off workers [became uninsured](#).

As the Biden Administration implements a national strategy to contain and mitigate COVID-19, Congress should help ensure that all individuals are taken care of regardless of their employment status. Medicaid provides a critical safety net for individuals who have lost or cannot afford coverage or care. As individuals lost both their health coverage and income during the pandemic, [Medicaid enrollment increased by 11.3%](#) between March and September of 2020. It is critical that state Medicaid agencies have the option to provide coverage for any care related to COVID-19 for anyone who needs it, especially those who are uninsured and undocumented.

**The Stronger Medicaid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Act** would allow state Medicaid agencies to provide increased coverage for COVID-19-related services to any uninsured individual. This legislation builds on the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*, which provided Medicaid coverage for COVID-19 testing, and would allow Medicaid programs to pay for treatment and prevention, hospitalization, drugs, vaccines, and other related services to all uninsured individuals with COVID-19. This bill would also clarify that undocumented individuals can receive similar treatments, prevention services, and vaccines through emergency Medicaid.

Endorsing Organizations: The Arc of Colorado, Jewish Family Service of Colorado, Colorado Safety Net Collaborative, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, Families USA, The Arc of the United States, Epilepsy Foundation, National Hispanic Medical Association, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, National Immigration Law Center, National Health Law Program, and People's Health Clinic.