

June 24, 2021

The President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Chairman Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

cc: Members of the United States House of Representatives, Members of the United States Senate

Dear President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Chairman Pallone, Chairman Wyden and Members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate:

**We represent the 12 states that have not yet expanded Medicaid, and today we write to urge Congress to pursue a direct coverage option for low-income individuals in non-expansion states in the forthcoming recovery legislation. Our families, friends, and neighbors can't wait any longer for health care.**

The undersigned organizations lead efforts to advance health equity and racial justice across Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

We are grateful for your leadership on the American Rescue Plan Act, particularly for key provisions that incentivize states to expand Medicaid and make health coverage more affordable for Americans. These provisions represent an important step towards health equity.

Yet, more needs to be done. Medicaid expansion extended quality health coverage to Americans who make too little to purchase a plan on the marketplace but too much to qualify for traditional state Medicaid.

**However, with twelve states still refusing to expand Medicaid—eight of them in the South—over two million uninsured poor adults have been left in the Medicaid coverage gap, with no realistic access to health coverage.** Across our states, more than 55% of these adults are Black, Hispanic, or Asian. That figure reaches as high as 72% in some states.

**Our residents—especially people of color—are being denied the right, benefits, and dignity of healthcare coverage granted to Americans in 38 other states, a right that Congress fully intended when it expanded Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act.**

Expansion states have made the greatest progress in narrowing racial gaps in health outcomes. They see fewer maternal deaths for Black and Hispanic women. And in rural communities, expansion has helped sustain struggling hospitals in areas that already experience sparse access to health care facilities.

A Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of over 400 studies found that Medicaid expansion saves lives, helps states and their hospitals save money, and improves people's health and well-being. Those benefits should not be denied to Americans simply because of where they live—especially not in regions that already bear long, enduring legacies of structural racism and violence.

State leaders continue to block the path forward for expansion despite additional federal incentives, upholding deeply politicized tensions over the will of their constituents while exacerbating health inequities in our communities.

**Without bold, federal action in the economic recovery package, communities of color in our states could be left waiting another decade or more for access to basic, life-saving health coverage. Congress has a brief window to act. Now is the time.**

America can't recover if all Americans aren't covered. We can't thrive as a nation if some communities continue to suffer. We can't continue to allow state leaders to stand in the way of the health and well-being of millions of Americans.

Our communities are counting on your leadership to ensure all Americans have access to quality, affordable health coverage by including a direct, comprehensive coverage option in recovery legislation.

We remain ready to work with you to meet this goal and would be eager to continue this discussion.

Sincerely,

9 to 5 Atlanta  
1199 Florida  
A Better Balance  
ACLU of Mississippi  
Action NC  
Advocacy House Services, Inc  
Advocates for Responsible Care  
Alabama Arise  
Alabama Black Women's Roundtable  
Alabama Child Health Improvement alliance  
Alabama Faith Council  
Alabama Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival  
Alabama Rare  
Alachua County Labor Coalition  
Allegany Franciscan Ministries  
Allergy & Asthma Network

American Association of University Women (AAUW), Georgia Chapter  
American Cancer Society, Georgia  
American Diabetes Association, Georgia  
American Heart Association, Georgia  
American Institute of Dental Public Health  
American Lung Association, Georgia  
Amity Medical Group  
Anti-Defamation League (Tzedek Georgia)  
Athens for Everyone  
Atlanta Community Food Bank  
Atlanta Jobs with Justice  
Autism Society of Texas  
Avenue  
B. Graham Consulting  
Better Wyoming  
BirthWell Partners Community Doula Project  
Black Voters Matter  
Broward for Progress  
Cairn Health, Inc.  
Cancer Recovery Group  
Carolina Jews for Justice  
Catalyst Miami  
Center for Black Women's Wellness  
Center for Civic & Public Policy Improvement  
Center for Urban Transformation  
Central Outreach and Advocacy Center  
Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy  
Children First  
Children's Defense Fund - Texas  
Children's Defense Fund Southern Regional Office  
Church & Society Committee, Anniston First United Methodist Church  
Circle of Friends Task Force  
Citizen Action of Wisconsin  
Citizen Coalition  
Coalition for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses  
Coalition for Health Care of NC  
Coalition for the People's Agenda  
Coalition of Texans with Disabilities  
Committee of Interns and Residents SEIU  
Community Enabler  
Community Family Centers  
Community Health Council of Wyandotte County  
Cover Alabama  
Democratic Disability Caucus of Florida  
Doctors Fighting Covid, LLC  
Doctors for America - Texas  
Doctors for America, Georgia Chapter  
Down Home North Carolina

Edgehill United Methodist Church  
El Centro, Inc.  
Emory University, Social Medicine Program  
Equality State Policy Center  
Every Texan  
Families First  
Feminist Women's Health Center  
Fiedler on the Roof Construction  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin Social Action Committee  
Florida Health Justice Project  
Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition  
Florida Policy Institute  
Florida Rising  
Florida Voices for Health  
Fort Bend Family Health Center, Inc. dba AccessHealth  
Foundation for the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming  
Georgia Academy of Family Physicians  
Georgia Budget & Policy Institute  
Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Georgia Council on Substance Abuse  
Georgia Equality  
Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center  
Georgia Organics  
Georgia Rural Urban Summit  
Georgia Society for Public Health Education  
Georgia Supportive Housing Association  
Georgia WAND  
Georgia Watch  
Georgians for a Healthy Future  
Greater Birmingham Ministries  
Haitian Neighborhood Center, Sant La  
Harris Allen Group LLC  
Health and Justice Advocacy Network  
Healthcare for the Homeless - Houston  
HealthSTAT  
Healthy Wyoming  
Hemophilia of Georgia  
Hispanic Health Coalition of Georgia  
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.  
Hometown Action  
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.  
Indivisible Georgia Coalition  
Interfaith Children's Movement  
International Pain Foundation  
Jewish Community Relations Council  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Atlanta  
Jewish Democratic Women's Salon  
Kansas Action for Children

Kansas Appleseed  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Kansas Health Foundation  
Kansas Interfaith Action  
Kansas Mental Health Coalition  
Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice Florida  
League of Women Voters, Georgia  
Mainstream Coalition  
Mental Health America of Georgia  
Mercy Care  
Metro Organization for Racial and Economic Equity  
Mi Familia Vota Education Fund  
Miami Workers Center  
Mississippi Center for Justice  
Mississippi Health Advocacy Program  
Mississippi Votes  
Moms Rising  
Montgomery County (Texas) Democratic Party  
MS Black Women's Roundtable  
NAACP Branch 56AA-B/Cookeville-Putnam Co., TN  
NAMI Tennessee (National Alliance on Mental Illness)  
NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina  
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas  
National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter  
National Association of Social Workers-Mississippi Chapter  
National Congress of Black Women, Inc - Orlando Chapter  
National Domestic Worker's Alliance, Atlanta chapter  
National Marrow Donor Program/Be The Match  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
NC AIDS Action Network  
NC Child  
NC Justice Center  
Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
Neverland designs  
New Hope and Love Community Church  
North Carolina Council of Churches  
Nurse Practitioner Alliance of Alabama  
Nurture KC  
Nurture the Next  
Partnership For Southern Equity Just Energy Academy  
Physicians for a National Health Program, Georgia chapter  
Planned Parenthood South Atlantic  
Planned Parenthood Southeast  
Presbyterians for a Better Georgia  
ProGeorgia  
Protect Our Care Georgia  
Proyecto Azteca  
Rx within Reach Georgia coalition

Sankofa Strides  
SickOfItTX  
SisterReach  
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center  
Southern Christian Coalition  
Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative  
Southwest Georgia Project  
SOWEGA Rising  
SPARK RJ  
SPLC Action Fund  
Step Up Savannah  
Tennessee Disability Coalition  
Tennessee Health Care Campaign  
Tennessee Justice Center  
Texans Care for Children  
Texas Oral Health Coalition  
Texas Parent to Parent  
Texas Poor People's Campaign  
The Afiya Center  
The Disabilities Leadership Coalition of Alabama  
The Healing Trust  
The North Texas Alliance to Reduce Unintended Pregnancy in Teens  
The Progressive Democrats of Orange County  
The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham  
Therapy Services LLC  
Trinity Behavioral Associates  
United Methodist Health Ministry Fund  
United Way of Greater Topeka  
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas  
United Way of Tarrant County  
Unity Wellness Center  
Vecino Health Centers  
Voices for Georgia's Children  
Western North Carolina AIDS Project  
Wilco Justice Alliance (Williamson County, TX)  
Wings Across Alabama  
Women Engaged  
Women for Kansas  
Wyoming Community Foundation  
Wyoming Equality  
Wyoming Interfaith Network  
Wyoming Medical Society  
Wyoming Rising  
YMCA of Greater Birmingham  
Young Invincibles  
YWCA Central Alabama  
YWCA of Greater Atlanta